



Aerial Hoop

**Intermediate Level
Instructor Training**

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UNIT 1

INTRODUCTION TO INTERMEDIATE HOOP

Welcome to the Spin City Intermediate Aerial Hoop Instructor Course. This course will help you take your students to the next level with their aerial hoop training, giving them new moves, ideas for combinations and choreography.

So, what makes an intermediate aerial hoop move? Intermediate moves generally have fewer points of contact with the hoop, they require a greater degree of strength, flexibility or conditioning to achieve the move, the entry or exit point may be slightly harder, it might require prior knowledge of a beginner's move, students are often working higher up the hoop or moves might be harder to spot from the instructor perspective.

With aerial hoop training it's vital that your students work through moves progressively; ensuring good physical and mental preparation will make your classes safe and effective. So how do you know when your students are ready to progress onto the intermediate syllabus? Students should be comfortable with approximately 80% of the beginner's moves, they should have a good base level of strength and flexibility; this can be assessed through observation of a range of beginner's moves (can they transition from a Delilah to a Crescent Moon with ease? How is their flexibility in moves such as Gazelle or Star on the Bar? Are they able to stay on the hoop for longer periods of time?) You are observing for consistency, confidence and awareness of movement. Do they have a good, general understanding of aerial hoop? A good knowledge of moves, combinations and an understanding of how they can use their body to control the hoop, movement within the hoop and unwanted momentum? Although at a beginner's level, students should be educated on issues such as how to reduce unwanted momentum when mounting the hoop, at an intermediate level it is vital the students understand this and how it applies to all aerial movement. This will help students immensely, especially when working higher up the hoop when your teaching methods will be limited.

UNIT 2

INTERMEDIATE MOVES

In this unit we will be identifying all of the intermediate moves that are taught in the Spin City Intermediate Aerial Hoop Course, looking at variations and adaptations of these moves for different students, how to break each move down into specific teaching points and the safety aspects that accompany each move.

BASIC SKILLS – LIFTING

At an intermediate level it's important that students are really focussing on training lifting into all positions on the hoop, especially their mounts. Lifting is a topic that we touch upon at a beginner's level, often as a progression at this stage. Most beginners will find it challenging enough to mount a hoop let alone thinking about lifting into the mount, rather than pushing off the floor therefore this is often a skill that we leave until the end of a beginner's level/start of intermediate. When we say 'lifting' we are looking for the students to mount the hoop by engaging the correct muscles rather than using a jump, or controlled swing (momentum). At a base level this will be a simple lift such as a bent leg, short arm Straddle Mount, at a higher level we are looking for straight arms and straight legs starting from a hanging position. It can help to start focussing on lifting into a straddle mount, progressing through the following stages:

1. **Straddle Mount (bent arms and legs) Straddle Dismount (bent arms and legs)**
2. **Straddle Mount (bent arms and legs) Straddle Dismount (bent arms, straight legs)**
3. **Straddle Mount (bent arms, straight legs) Straddle Dismount (bent arms, straight legs)**
4. **Straddle Mount (bent arms, straight legs) Straddle Dismount (straight arms, straight legs)**
5. **Straddle Mount (straight arms, straight legs) Straddle Dismount (straight arms, straight legs)**

Other mounts should also be trained using the above system, including Pike Mount, Side Mount/Dismount and also mounting to Front Balance. Not only will this help them when it comes to inverting on the top bar but it will also help students to control the momentum of their hoop, increase their strength levels benefitting other moves and build stronger posture.

EXECUTION AND CLEAN MOVEMENT

At a beginner's level the focus is strongly on safe technique. Safety is put above all other factors when teaching. When student's progress to an intermediate stage, this is the point at which we start to discuss execution. Although safety is paramount at every level of learning, when students are comfortable with the basics, they should be able to think further than the basic move (what they are doing) to include **how** they are doing the move. This can be broken down into two areas of focus; firstly 'clean movement'. Clean movement is where students are transitioning cleanly between each move and position. Students should be aiming to make each movement economical, making each movement smooth and making as few changes as possible between positions (for example, if you need to move the hand grip up the side bar of the hoop, trying to do this in one movement rather than three). The second area of focus at this level should be 'execution'. Execution refers to how well a move is performed. This encompasses a number of factors, starting with full extension or flexion of the joints (if the leg should be straight – it should be completely straight at the knee, should the ankle joint be extended with pointed toes or should it be flexed?) Angles or lines should also be considered (should the leg be pointing downwards towards the floor or upwards to the

ceiling? Should there be a straight line from the top of the fingers to the bottom of the foot?). Angles or lines are what will make the move look more aesthetically pleasing. Execution is not limited to the final shape, but also includes the mount and dismount from the position, which takes us back to clean movement. Proper execution is what makes simple movement look beautiful. Moves do not need to be physically challenging to be effective if executed properly. Correct execution also tends to mean the move is more stable as the correct muscles are engaged helping to hold the shape, creating balance and developing strength.

MUSCULAR BALANCE

At a beginner's level, we encourage all students to train moves on both sides equally, to ensure muscular balance. As the moves get progressively more difficult, students tend to favour their dominant side. This can be a confidence issue, the dominant side is likely to feel stronger and also more comfortable students may also find they revert to this side by force of habit rather than anything else. At this stage, we need students comfortably performing moves on both sides as a number of combinations at both intermediate and advanced level will require students to use both their dominant and non-dominant side. Not only will this help their hoop progression, it will also help ensure they develop balance within their muscles, which again helps posture and also helps from an injury prevention perspective.

INTERMEDIATE HOOP SYLLABUS

FRONT BALANCE



LIGHT SPOT: LEGS & CORE

LIGHT SPOT: CREATE A 'WALL' TO PUSH AGAINST



TEACHING POINTS

A pre-requisite for the Pull Up to Front Balance would be to ensure that students have the strength to perform a controlled and lifted Pike or Straddle Mount (bent leg and arm) as this will ensure they have the strength to perform this move safely.

FRONT BALANCE PULL UP

1. The Front Balance Pull Up can be performed in an overhand or underhand grip (underhand tends to be more common).
2. Stand facing the hoop with hands gripped slightly wider than hip width.
3. Drop your weight under the hoop and pull down in your arms pushing off your standing leg, lift up with your hips taking your free leg through the hoop and letting your standing leg follow.
4. You should aim to get the hips onto the bottom bar, with the bar sitting just below the hip bones and fold over into a pike position.

5. Walk the hands up the sides of the hoop until they are approx. at the half way point.
6. Squeezing the legs together, if this feels safe, take your hands out wide to the full front balance position.
7. You should be using the lower back, glutes, hamstrings and core muscles to support this position.
8. To dismount, place the hands back onto the side bars and slide them down until you are folded over the bottom bar. Forwards roll to dismount off the bottom bar.

An alternative version of this mount would be to take both legs through the hoop together in a pike position.

FRONT BALANCE FROM SEAT (EASY)

1. An alternative entry point to Front Balance would be to start from a seated position.
2. From sitting, take both hands to one side of the hoop with the outside arm high and the inside arm by the hip or if necessary, behind the hip.
3. Keeping the inside leg straight, tuck the outside knee and start to pull through the arms drawing the torso towards the side bar.
4. As the back hip lifts off the bottom bar, roll over the inside thigh turning fully onto the front of the hips then adjust the body so that you are in a hanging position in the middle of the bottom bar to lift to Front Balance.
5. Dismount from Front Balance as normal.
6. Repeat on the other side.

FRONT BALANCE FROM SEAT (HARD)

An alternative form of this mount/dismount would be to start from Stag Seat, taking the back arm above your head and the front arm down behind your hips then use a 'push-pull' action to lift the hips off the bar, simultaneously leaning forward with the chest and straightening the top arm to place the hips on the bottom bar. Again dismount from Front Balance as normal and repeat on the other side.

FRONT BALANCE TO SEAT (THREAD THROUGH)

1. Starting in a Front Balance position take one hand down the side of your thigh and up onto the side bar of the hoop mid-point or above with the thumb up and palm of the hand away from you.
2. Use the free arm to reach across in the direction of the same side bar
3. Lift through the heels
4. Allow the torso to rotate without dropping the hip position (keep a strong core)
5. Reach up onto the side bar with the same hand and pull up to sitting
6. Alternatively, the top leg can thread out of the hoop to end up in a Birdie Prep position with one leg in front and one behind the bottom bar.
7. Repeat on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Make sure the hands are wide enough that you do not trap your hand grip under your hips when you reach the folded position.

- ✓ Think about driving your legs directly up and then down to get the front of the hips onto the bottom bar. Don't let the legs kick forwards as this will create unnecessary momentum and make it harder to get the hips on the bottom bar.
- ✓ If necessary, use the feet on the side bars to help pull the hips upwards before folding over.
- ✓ In the front balance position, ensure the glutes are engaged, the legs are squeezing together and that the lower back, hamstrings and abdominals are engaged to help stabilise the position. This position takes a lot of strength so hands should be used as necessary until the strength is built.
- ✓ Ensure the chest is lifted and the posture is nice and long.
- ✓ Students should be confident in the dismount (tuck and roll forwards) before they prepare this move.
- ✓ The balance can be difficult to find in this shape. The spotter should stand to the side bar and provide a light spot with the aim of helping guide the student to their balance point. It's important not to apply too much pressure in this spot as you can adversely tip the student out of the shape in both directions.
- ✓ When mounting from seat, the roll over the inside thigh creates a lot of pressure and can be uncomfortable for some students. Encourage them to 'keep rolling' rather than stopping when they feel this pressure.
- ✓ When rolling back to seat, do not let the bar leave the thighs in the roll to avoid dismounting.
- ✓ Be cautious of students with abdominal piercings when mounting this move as they can be caught.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot the Front Balance position, its best to stand to the side bar and provide a light spot to the student's legs/core. Alternatively, a 'wall' can be created by the student's feet that they are able to push against to aid lifting up. A heavy spot could cause the student to lose balance but this position will allow you to control the direction of their movement, should they start to tip.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Discomfort due to pressure on the hips when learning the position: The hips will need conditioning in this position as will the inner thigh if you are teaching the rolling mount from seat. Although this is often seen as an easier entry point as it does not require the strength of the pull up into the hoop – it can be highly uncomfortable for some students. Spend time conditioning the roll by mimicking the movement in similar moves such as Cobra in beginners to help start conditioning, then encourage students to hang in the folded pike position until they feel comfortable to start to work on the balance.

Balance issues: It can be difficult to find the balance point in the top position. Encourage students to engage all the correct muscles to help stabilise. Practicing exercises such as dorsal raises and leg raises on the floor as part of your conditioning will help build the strength needed to hold the balance. Some students may also find it beneficial to concentrate on one spot to help their balance in this move.

Fear of taking the hands off: This can be an issue with confidence and students should be allowed to progress to hands off at their own pace. Encourage students that if they are taking hands off, not to panic if they do start to tip – a spotter will be present to help their correct the position if necessary, and ensure they are comfortable with the tuck and roll dismount so that they know and have practised this emergency dismount option.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
<p>⇒ Hanging pike or tuck (Cannonball) position – practise dismounting from this position by controlling a tucked dismount to gain the strength to lift back up</p> <p>⇒ Practising the rolling action through moves such as Cobra or High Arabesque</p>	<p>⇒ Keep the hands on the side bars</p> <p>⇒ Alternative entries and exits to and from this move (from Seat – rolling or pull and push, from pull over from the ground)</p>	<p>⇒ Harder entry points such as Amazon to Front Balance.</p> <p>⇒ Taking both legs through the hoop in a pike position when rolling to Front Balance</p> <p>⇒ Combinations such as Front Balance roll out to Arabesque or Delilah</p>

HINTS AND TIPS

To achieve a full Front Balance several muscle groups are at work: glutes, hamstrings and core are all key players in the successful execution of the move. Watch out for students' lower body engagement, if the feet are dropping down the glutes and hamstrings are not doing their job.

A great ground-based conditioning exercise to use to support this posture is an arch body hold – the opposite of a hollow body hold. This could be included towards the end of the warm up or used as a kinaesthetic learning activity before students try the Front Balance in the hoop.

SINGLE HOCKS MOUNT



LIGHT GRIP SPOT (ANKLE) & UPPER BACK SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Pre-requisites for this move would be a strong mount from a Double Hocks Position and also a minimum of one entry move to include Double Hocks, Splits Under The Bar, Delilah and Open Delilah.

1. Start with one knee hooked as close to the centre of the bottom bar as possible (starting moves include Splits under the Bar, Delilah, Open Delilah etc...)
2. Placing both hands in an underhand grip either side of the knee
3. Keeping the chest close to the knee, use a rocking motion to take the weight out of your hands, allowing you to jump them up the side bars simultaneously to the mid-point or beyond.
4. At this stage, drive downwards with the hocked knee, pulling upwards with the arms to bring the body into a Birdie Prep position in the hoop.
5. The back leg can then be brought through the hoop to a seated position.
6. Alternatively, retrograde the mount to dismount and exit from Delilah
7. Repeat this move on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the knee that you are mounting on has a good hocks on the bottom bar and that this is retained at all times throughout the mount.
- ✓ Students sometimes confuse Single Hocks Mount with Russian Mount. To clarify, the Single Hocks Mount travels forwards, whereas the Russian Mount rolls backwards into the hoop.
- ✓ Make sure both hands move simultaneously up the side bars of the hoop if using the jumping movement, jumping one hand at a time can destabilise the hoop. If moving one hand at a time use the abdominals to lift the chest and reach as high as possible without momentum – repeat with the other hand.
- ✓ This move is more challenging on a single point hoop as any shift of body weight can destabilise the hoop causing rotation. Try and ensure balance in the movement of the arms and keeping the knee centred can help.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

Spot this move from the side bar of the hoop with a hand over the front of the straight leg and the other hand supporting the student’s upper back.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Moving the hand position – often when moving the hands up the side bars of the hoop in this move, one hand catches higher than the other causing the hoop to rotate. Reiterate to students that both hands need to move at the same time to an equal height and offer both options of placing or jumping hands up the side bars.

Pressure through the knee. It can help to have introduced Single Hocks Hang prior to Single Hocks Mount so students are aware of the feeling on the hocked knee before they mount the hoop on a single leg.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Practicing Splits under the Bar from the single hocks rock back technique to get used to the feeling without having to lift up into the hoop.

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Single Hocks Hang
- ⇒ Delilah Mount/Side Mount (this often feels more balanced so could also be offered as a regression)

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Combinations such as Single Hocks Mount to Roll to Single Hocks Hang
- ⇒ Advanced Progression: Russian Mount

SINGLE POINT FLAG



HUG SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Students should be able to perform consistent, good quality shoulder shrugs as a conditioning exercise prior to attempting this move. Moves like Splits Away can also help educate students to achieving correct posture through engagement.

1. From a seated position in the hoop, shuffle yourself towards one side of the hoop.
2. Place the arm closest to the side of the hoop directly above the head in an overhand grip.
3. Take the other hand across the hoop to the base of the other side bar.
4. Pulling through the top arm and pushing out through the horizontal arm, slowly drop your hips out the front of the hoop
5. Ensure the shoulder is engaged on both arms, that both arms are straight and actively pushing.
6. Dismount by gently releasing the hand grip and stepping onto the floor.
7. Repeat this move on the other side.

Alternative entry points to this move include tipping forwards from Star On The Bar and from Front Amazon.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ In this position, both shoulders should be actively engaged as with the top arm pulling and the horizontal arm pushing as the arms are holding the entire body weight.
- ✓ The core should be engaged and students should squeeze through the glutes and the abdominals to achieve a strong upright posture.
- ✓ Do not allow students to ‘slouch’ into this shape or hang in this position.
- ✓ Ensure students are working both sides equally in this position.
- ✓ Ensure the bottom arm is placed at a good angle – it should be sitting approximately horizontal at the base of the opposing side bar. Too close or too far can cause excessive wrist pressure or a difficult angle on this joint. It can also be difficult to achieve a push through this arm if it’s too high or low.
- ✓ Ensure students are fully aware of how to dismount this move should either arm feel as if it might give whilst holding the move.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot this position a hug technique is often beneficial on the student’s legs if needed (very useful as a support mechanism if the students pushing arm gives way to help support them into a safe dismount).

COMMON PROBLEMS

Keeping the arms engaged: It’s vital the supporting horizontal arm is locked straight and actively pushing with the shoulder engaged at all times as this is a key source of support. The main support mechanism is the top arm, which should be pulling upwards from the shoulder joint, with the hand in an overhand grip, fingers wrapped around the top bar and thumb locked.

Dropping into the move: Ensure students have moved towards the side bar before setting up this position the closer they are the more they can lift and place the body into position rather than dropping forwards into it. It’s also important to ensure they are using their entire body to support good posture in this position, this move appears far easier than it is and students are tempted to hang here rather than lift through the chest and shoulders.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Practising moving through Single Point Flag as a dismount from a variety of other moves without holding the position

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Double Point Flag, on a DP Hoop as you are able to place the top hand at the centre of the top bar this means you can push the hoop away rather than lie flat in front of the hoop

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Single Point Flag is the starting position for Around The World

AMAZON – FRONT/ARMPIT



HUG SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

It can be beneficial for students to have attempted Single Point Flag or Single Leg Cradle prior to attempting this move as these offer the two safest dismounts from this move.

1. From a seated position in the hoop, shuffle yourself towards one side of the hoop.
2. Place the arm closest to the side of the hoop behind the side bar so that the hoop is in the armpit and hold the side bar in a thumb up grip.
3. Take the other hand onto the bottom bar just outside the hip.
4. Pushing through the bottom arm and pulling through the arm on the side bar, slowly drop your hips out the front of the hoop, ensuring the bottom arm is locked straight.
5. The hand can then be removed from the side bar so the body is held on the bottom arm and in the armpit of the side arm in the Front Amazon position.

6. Dismount either via a Single Point Flag position or sweep the outside leg into the hoop and adjust the head position to a Single Leg Cradle.
7. Repeat this move on the other side.

Alternative entry points to this move include tipping forwards from Star on the Bar and Side Amazon.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ In this position, the armpit must be securely behind the side bar and the other arm must be locked at the elbow and shoulder as this will be supporting the majority of the body weight.
- ✓ Do not remove the hand from the side bar unless you feel you have a good push through the bottom arm and can retain the locked position.
- ✓ Ensure the bottom arm is placed at a good angle – it should be sitting approximately mid-way between the central bottom point of the hoop and the middle of the side bar. Too close or too far can cause excessive wrist pressure or a difficult angle on this joint.
- ✓ Ensure students are fully aware of how to dismount this move should their bottom arm feel as if it might give whilst holding the position.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot this position a hug technique is often beneficial on the student’s legs if needed (very useful as a support mechanism if the students pushing arm gives way to help support them into a safe dismount). Again this is a highly locked position with a number of entry and exit points making it very safe.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Keeping arm straight: It’s vital the supporting arm is locked straight and actively pushing with the shoulder engaged at all times as this is the main source of support in this position. The armpit area can also get slightly burnt when transitioning in and out of this position: If students are concerned, ensure they are wearing layers to cover skin.

Dropping into the move: Ensure students have moved towards the side bar before setting up this position the closer they are the more they can lift and place the body into position rather than dropping forwards into it.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Keeping the hand on the side bar for an additional point of support

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Side Amazon
- ⇒ Alternative entry point from Star On The Bar or Side Amazon
- ⇒ Alternative dismount options such as transitioning to Cobra (High Mermaid) or Wineglass

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Combinations including Front Amazon into Wineglass into Cradle, front Amazon into Single Leg Cradle into Side Star or Back Balance into Front Amazon into Single Point Flag

AMAZON – SIDE/NECK



HUG SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Pre-requisites for this move would be to have a strong Front Amazon (the easier version of this move) this will ensure students have the required strength in the bottom arm. It can also be beneficial to practise alternative mounts/dismounts into and out of this position including but not limited to Man In The Moon, Single Point Flat, Cradle and Single Leg Cradle.

1. Starting from a Stag Seat, take the back arm above your head onto the top bar. The front arm can start in front or behind your hip position but needs to end up roughly in the centre of the bottom bar (behind the hip position is often better as it is easier to slide the hand forwards rather than draw it backwards).
2. When the arms are set, pull up in the top arm to drop the hips off the side of the bottom bar, at the same time leaning backwards until the same shoulder as top arm makes contact with the back side bar of the hoop.

3. Slide the bottom arm into the centre of the bottom bar and lock the arm at the elbow and shoulder.
4. If this position feels safe, the top arm can be removed from the hoop.
5. Dismount options include putting the top arm back on and dropping out to a Single Point Flag, or swinging one or both legs up and back into the hoop to achieve a Cradle/Single Leg Cradle position.
6. Repeat this move on the other side.

An alternative mount into this position would be from Man in the Moon, using one foot in the hoop to help support your body weight while you adjust the hand position and let the hips drop off the hoop. This also provides an alternative dismount.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the side bar is resting high up the shoulder towards the neck to create a secure lock.
- ✓ Ensure the bottom arm is completely locked in this position and isn't too close to the body (as this creates a sharp angle on the wrist) and isn't too far away (as this puts excessive pressure on the shoulder/neck) it should be around the mid-point of the bottom bar.
- ✓ Ensure you pull up in your top arm to place the side bar onto the shoulder in the correct position.
- ✓ Try and keep the torso relatively upright, don't allow it to slide too far down the side bar or to slouch. The core should be engaged to help support the arm block and the spine should be pressing backwards into the side bar.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot this position a hug technique is often beneficial on the student's legs if needed (very useful as a support mechanism if the student's pushing arm gives way to help support them into a safe dismount). The Side Amazon is generally found to be more challenging than the Front Amazon and is a more technical lock so may require a heavier spot at points – especially on entry/exit from the move.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Students are often too low down the side bar: This often occurs with students that have started with their arm in front of their hip position. From here, students forget to draw this arm back whilst lifting into the Amazon therefore they end up low down the side bar. This is partially an aesthetic amendment, as higher up the side bar the line will be better but this can also help create a more comfortable position on the neck, shoulder and locked arm and a better angle at the wrist.

Keeping arm straight: It's vital the supporting arm is locked straight and actively pushing with the shoulder engaged at all times as this is the main source of support in this position.

Discomfort on shoulder/neck: Some students may find this move applies too much pressure to the shoulder/neck area. If that is the case, encourage students to revert to the Front Amazon position instead until they have increased their conditioning in this area.

Students often place their head on the wrong side of the hoop, finishing on the incorrect shoulder. It can be helpful to explain to students that the shoulder they are resting on should be the same as their

top arm or that that head should be on the same side of the hoop as the bottom knuckles. This is vital to ensure the final position is secure.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Front Amazon is generally deemed easier than Side Amazon ⇒ Keeping the top hand on the top bar to support the final position can help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Front Amazon ⇒ different entry point such as from Front Amazon; sometimes students can find this an easier transition as the bottom hand is already in the correct position ⇒ Different exit points such as back to Man in the Moon by pushing through the outside foot inside the hoop to lift the hips back into place ⇒ Different leg variations in the Amazon position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Combinations using a Side Amazon such as Side Amazon to Cradle or Single Leg Cradle, Side Amazon to Front Balance pulling through the hoop or Side Amazon to Iron Fanny by lifting up and splitting the legs over the bottom bar

HALF BACK BALANCE



PIKE BACK BALANCE



SHOULDER SPOT (HALF & PIKE)



SPOT BALANCE: LEG & SHOULDER



TEACHING POINTS

Students need to be confident in Star On The Bar before attempting this move.

1. Start from a Star On The Bar position and replace the hands on the bottom bar either side of the hips.
2. Retaining the arch in the lower back and keeping both legs in contact with the side bars, slide the legs upwards until they are in a pike position with the ankles/feet resting on the top bar.
3. From this position take one leg backwards to counterbalance the weight of the head and chest.
4. When you have achieved an 'L' shape, if students feel safe then the hands can be removed in this position, ensuring the hands are taken wide or over the head to create the necessary balance and pull the supporting leg towards the hoop.
5. To dismount, reverse the process to return to a Star On The Bar position then dismount via Birds Nest.

Alternative mounts would be to drop directly into the Half or Pike Back Balance, missing out the Star On The Bar, or from the Star On The Bar, rotate one leg upwards while one leg travels backwards to create the 'L' shape.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ It can take a long period of time to condition your lower back to achieve a comfortable back balance and to find the balance point in different leg variations. Students may wish to try the 'set up' without taking their hands off.
- ✓ When it comes to arm positioning – wide arms (opening up from the chest) and arms overhead will both effect the balance of weight on the bottom bar. Wide arms is generally taught as an initial option – as it doesn't add excessive weight to the torso but helps to pull the top leg into the top bar and allows for the safest emergency dismount. Some students may find they need to take the arms overhead to create this weight balance – adding weight to the torso side. Make sure students are aware this is a more challenging position to self-rescue from.
- ✓ It's important that when in the final position, the bar is resting on the lower back (on the sacrum), the bottom is on the same side of the hoop as the legs, the legs are actively pushing into the bar and a lock is created by arching the back and sticking the bottom out. Do not encourage students to take their hands off until they feel completely safe in this lock.
- ✓ A number of feet positions are valid in the move. Although from an aesthetic point of view the foot pointed behind the top bar is preferable, it's also possible to press under the top bar if the leg fits, or to flex the foot so that the toes curl around the top bar if necessary.
- ✓ For the back leg position, pike is generally more challenging than the 'L' shape. When in the 'L' shape half back balance, it is also possible to bend or straighten the back leg to help find the balance point.
- ✓ Some students find that when changing leg positions in the back balance they will need to adjust the placement on their back. The weight balance will vary slightly move to move and it's important to adjust the hip position to compensate.
- ✓ Students with back issues should avoid this move. Alternatives such as a Front Balance could be attempted instead.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot this move there are two common options. The first would be to stand to the side bar of the hoop, similar to Front Balance to help the student find the balance point. The second would be to stand on the side of the head and spot the shoulder position.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Students can find back balance uncomfortable, especially if they suffer from back issues; if students do feel they are capable of trying the position, then encourage regular short periods of conditioning and offer alternative moves that work on a similar balance premise such as front balance.

Finding the balance point: Students will be used to Star On The Bar where the balance point is easy to find as both legs are pushing into the hoop, in a Half Back Balance only one leg provides pressure therefore students will have to try different arm variations (arms wide/or overhead) and also different back leg variations (bent or straight) to find their balance point. It is also possible to move the position on the back if necessary higher or lower to stabilise the balance. Remember that if a student feels unsafe, they have the option of flexing the foot into or over the hoop or using the strop to support the top leg.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Half Back Balance or Pike Back Balance with hands on the hoop ⇒ Students may feel safer with their foot pushing against the top bar of the hoop or resting on the strop/rope (depending on leg length to size of hoop) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Pike Back Balance ⇒ Pike Back Balance with one leg bent in towards the chest ⇒ Half Back Balance with back leg straight or bent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Grabbing back foot in Half Back Balance (more flexible variation) ⇒ Back Balances can be combined in sequence to aid conditioning (Star On The Bar to Half Back Balance to Pike Back Balance for example), use hands when students are new to these transitions

WINEGLASS



SPOT FROM SIDE BAR



GUIDANCE SPOT FOR DISMOUNT



TEACHING POINTS

Pre-requisites for this move would be firstly to have taught Side Star (similar shape to help students understand the hip/shoulder lock). Students will also need a minimum of two of the entry and exit moves for this position, these include Birdie Prep, Cradle, Front Amazon, Side Star, Star on the Bar and Half Back Balance amongst others.

WINEGLASS FROM CRADLE POSITION

1. Starting in a Cradle position
2. Transfer the grip on the shoulder to the armpit so that the head and shoulders are now all to the front of the hoop.

3. Take the top leg out of the hoop and dropping it towards the floor, rotate to face the opposite direction, at the same time straightening the leg that remains in the hoop.
4. The shoulder and the bottom leg should remain locked behind the hoop with the hips and top leg dropped down in front in the Wineglass Position.
5. To dismount, return to the Cradle position and dismount as normal from a seated position.

WINEGLASS FROM BIRDIE PREP POSITION

1. Start in a Birdie Prep position.
2. Keeping your hands on the top bar of the aerial hoop, lift the pelvis off the hoop and slide it forwards and down.
3. Rotate through the hips to allow you to bend the back knee onto the hoop in a hocks position.
4. This support will allow you to take the same arm to front leg behind the side bar of the hoop until the hoop is resting in the front of the arm pit (the hand can be kept onto the side bar at this point).
5. At this stage, extend the back leg up diagonally away from the supporting arm until the leg is extended upwards touching the opposite side bar behind the calf and the body is making a 'Y' shape.
6. If this feels comfortable, take the hands off the hoop.
7. To dismount, hook the leg that is extended behind the hoop and pull the body back up into the hoop, to the Birdie Prep then dismount as normal from seated.
8. Repeat this move on the other side.

This move has a number of alternative mounts including threading one leg through from a Front Amazon, tipping forwards from a back balance (ensuring the top leg is on the right side of the hoop) and switching sides from a Side Star amongst others!

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure both the opposite shoulder and leg are in behind the hoop to create a good lock. This lock will be increased by dropping the hip position in front of the hoop.
- ✓ Ensure the student does not drop the hips too low in front on the hoop so that they are either unable to dismount or beyond the limit of their flexibility.
- ✓ If the student does not feel safe in the wineglass position then the hands can both be kept on the hoop, one on the side bar and one on the top bar for support.
- ✓ Arching the back slightly can help achieve a good hip position.
- ✓ Students often confuse this move with Side Star – this can result in confusion as to the arm leg lock. To clarify, in Wineglass the hips are always in front on the hoop with the opposing leg and arm behind the side bars, in Side Star the hips are always behind the hoop with the opposing arm and leg in front of the side bars.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

This position is a good lock so does not require a heavy spot. It can help to support the student as they are lowering to the full position by standing on the side bar of the locked arm and front leg. This will also put you in a position to perform a guidance spot dismount if necessary.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Unable to drop hips in front on the hoop while retaining the back leg position: Using the top hand can help the hip drop, as can bending the back leg and leading with the knee to allow the shin to push off the hoop.

Flexibility issues: Wineglass requires a degree of flexibility in the adductors and the hamstring in the lifted leg so can be uncomfortable for students with limited flexibility. Side star would be a good option for these students or encouraging them to try the Wineglass position without dropping their hips too low in front of the bottom bar.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ If students feel unsafe, an easier version would be to keep the hand on the hoop and keep the knee bent. This can also stop the hips from dropping too low

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ An alternative move of a similar shape would be a Side Star
- ⇒ Alternative leg variations would be to try bending both legs or bending the bottom leg to grab the foot behind the hoop
- ⇒ A further alternative would be to hold the move on the hand rather than the armpit in a long arm grip. This allows for greater flexibility

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Wineglass has a number of different starting moves including Cradle, Front Amazon, Side Star, Birdie, Back Balance and a few more advanced entry points such as a Split Pike, Beat in front and Delilah On Top
- ⇒ There are also progressions in the dismount option, including turning to Arabesque and Cradle to Cradle roll amongst others

IRON FANNY



HIP SPOT

HOOP & HIP SPOT

PARTNER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Pre-requisites for the Iron Fanny would be a Birdie Prep position along with the strength to perform a minimum of two pull-ups on the top bar. Students can practise these during conditioning sessions, but these are needed to get into and out of this move.

1. Begin in a seated position with one leg in front of the bottom bar and one leg behind with the bottom bar on the back of the front thigh.
2. Taking both hands into an opposing grip over the head, lift through the arms to turn the body to face the side bar.
3. As the body turns, engage the glutes and inner thighs locking the legs together then slowly lower the body back onto the hoop, sitting backwards slightly to achieve the Iron Fanny position which should sit to one side of the genital area leaning back onto the glutes.
4. If this feels safe, one or both hands can be removed.

5. The ankles can be crossed to create an additional lock if required.
6. To dismount place the hands back onto the top bar and pull upwards to take the weight out of the legs, allowing you to turn forwards into the Birdie Prep position with the bottom bar on the back of the front thigh.

Alternative entries into this move include from Man in the Moon and from Crescent Moon.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure students are strong enough to use their arms to take the weight out of their legs to transition; this helps to achieve a much more comfortable final position.
- ✓ Make sure in the Iron Fanny, the ankles are crossed to begin with, the thighs are engaged as are the glutes and the student is sitting backwards slightly, tilting their pelvis slightly to take pressure out of the pelvic bone. When they have the strength to keep squeezing their legs without the lock at the ankles this can be removed.
- ✓ Only encourage students to remove hands when they are ready, not only does this move take conditioning, it also requires finding a difficult balance point which will take time. It can help to show students alternative grip options such as both hands in front of the body in an opposing grip. This is also a good 'grab' if the student feels as if they are starting to roll or lose balance.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot this move, stand either behind or in front of the student so that you are holding the side bar to help stabilise the hoop. From this position you can also provide a rescue spot were the student to roll to either side. An alternative spot would be to have one spotter either side of the student stabilising the hip position.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Students find this position uncomfortable: The Iron Fanny does take some conditioning therefore encourage students to go through the 'prep' stages of turning into the move, without taking their hands off, then turning straight back out of it to condition themselves to this position. It is important that they are achieving the correct placement and engagement on this move. The hoop should not be resting on the genital area and although this move can be uncomfortable it should not be painful to this area.

Engaging the leg muscles: It's vital the adductors and glutes are engaged in this position to protect the pelvis. Students often find it hard to understand this; encouraging them to cross the ankles can help force the engagement until they have built up the muscles needed to engage without this lock.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
<p>⇒ An easier variation would be to keep both hands on the hoop above the head or in front of the body</p> <p>⇒ Students can also practise turning from Birdie prep into Iron Fanny and back</p>	<p>⇒ Ankles can be crossed or uncrossed in this position as necessary</p> <p>⇒ A lean back position is also an option with the shoulder resting against the side bar similar to an Amazon</p>	<p>⇒ Dismount options include rolling forwards to Crescent Moon or backwards to Man In The Moon</p> <p>⇒ Iron Fanny is a great starting point for learning to roll on the hoop as it can be rolled into a Candlestick, Walking Man, Splits or Crab Under the Bar</p>

REVERSE FIGUREHEAD



HOOP & SHOULDER SPOT



SHOULDER & GRIP SPOT (HAND)



TEACHING POINTS

The pre-requisites for this move would be **Splits Away (double foot is more beneficial)** and **Owl Position**. Students should have a strong **Releve (foot grip)** and be confident in their hand grip too. It can also be beneficial to have practised standing straight up and down from an **Owl position** to become accustomed to the height change in this move and **Reverse Splits Away** to understand the pull through the arms.

1. From an Owl Position, place the hands at shoulder width above the head on the top bar.
2. Pushing through the feet, straighten the legs and using the glutes, drive the hips up towards the hoop.
3. At the same time, pull up through the arms, lifting the chest engaging the shoulders and arching the back.
4. Retain the tension at the top point of the move for the Reverse Figurehead position.
5. To dismount, keep the chest lifted, pull through the arms transitioning into a short arm grip while bending through the knees to return to the Owl position.

An alternative dismount would be to drop the hips to Double Leg Splits Away keeping the legs straight and pull back into sitting in the hoop from there.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ It's vital to have a strong, locked hand grip in this move as this is your safety. If the hand grip were to slip then the student would fall off the hoop.
- ✓ The bottom bar should sit in the ball of the foot with the toes engaged around the bar and the heels lifted.
- ✓ This move requires a great deal of muscular strength and control – ensure the glutes are engaged, the shoulders are pulling back and down and that the core is supporting the final posture.
- ✓ Leaning back will create a good line to the move – ensure students do not go beyond their comfortable range of flexibility. Lifting through the chest can also help.
- ✓ As a starting point it can be good to repeat the transition into and out of this move without holding the final position to build the strength to do so.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

This is a very difficult move to spot at height as the student if they were to slip would be falling onto the spotter. It is recommended to learn this move on a low hoop to allow the spotter to get a good point of contact on the upper back. It can also be beneficial to spot the hand grip in this move where possible.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Lifting through the hips. Students often find it very difficult to get the hips high enough. It's important to use the glutes to push the hips upwards when driving through the legs to mount the move.

Feeling unsafe in the hand grip. This move requires a strong grip in the hands and a strong pull through the arms to mount and subsequently secure the move. Moves such as Splits Away can help to practise this grip and engagement but will remove the additional risk of height from the move.

Tipping – as students push upwards into this move, this will cause the hoop to tip. Double point hoops will end up more horizontal than single point hoops in this move. Ensure students are aware of this movement and make sure alternative moves are available.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Owl
- ⇒ Splits Away
- ⇒ Reverse Splits Away
- ⇒ Standing up on the hoop from an Owl Position

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Standing straight up on the hoop from an Owl position rather than leaning back into the Reverse Figurehead

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Single Leg Reverse Figurehead
- ⇒ Single Leg Reverse Figurehead into Standing Splits up the Strop
- ⇒ Combinations such as Reverse Figurehead to Reverse Splits Away

WALKING MAN



HIP SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Pre-requisites for this move are Candlestick and Side Straddle. It can also help to have conditioned the ankles to some extent through moves such as Angel, Reverse Angel and Birds Nest.

1. With the hoop side on and the hands in an opposing grip, push upwards into the candlestick position.
2. From the candlestick, walk the hands down the bottom bar so they are as central as possible.
3. Take the top leg across the hoop onto the other side bar and flex the foot locking it onto the side bar so that the foot is on the opposite side to the hip.
4. Pull the hips up towards the bottom bar.
5. If this position feels safe, try removing one or both hands.
6. To dismount place both hands back onto the bottom bar and perform a straddle dismount.
7. Repeat this move on the other side.
- 8.

An alternative mount for this position would be from a Side Straddle. From the Side Straddle you can choose to either hook the back leg first, or hook both legs simultaneously.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the feet are flexed to create a grip point in the ankle. This move can be performed with straight legs on the correct sized hoop but this is a more advanced move.
- ✓ This move is safer with bare skin on the feet.
- ✓ Ensure the feet are on the correct side of the hoop; you should have one foot either side creating a cross lock. The feet should be on the opposite side of the hoop to the corresponding hip.
- ✓ Make sure when the hips are pulled up to the bottom bar, the glutes and inner thighs are engaged to create a good grip on the bar.
- ✓ You may need to adjust the height of your hips in this move, depending on the size of your hoop compared to the length of your legs to ensure a comfortable lock that does not put excessive pressure on the knee joint.
- ✓ Both legs should be straight; bending the legs can cause the grip to feel unsafe.
- ✓ Both legs should be actively engaged with the adductors squeezing the hoop in a scissor lock.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot this position, a hug technique can be used or the instructor can spot the shoulders from a kneeling position on the mat to protect the head.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Discomfort due to the grip point on the ankle: This will require some conditioning. Encourage students to keep their hands on until they feel comfortable in this position. If students do have ankle issues, get them to avoid this move and Ankle Hang if they find it aggravates the joint.

Students can find it difficult to pull their hips right up to the bottom bar: This requires a degree of strength and is often necessary for students to lock the leg grip. Until the pull up to the bar is performed students will often feel unsafe in this position. Positions such as Candlestick in your beginner's classes will help to mimic this action.

Incorrect angle. Students should have their hands on the centre point of the bottom bar to pull up into this position so that both ankles can get a good lock and both legs are working equally, with an equal amount of pressure. Often students creep up the side bar which can result in an uneven leg lock. Encourage students to adjust to the central point before working on removing their hand grip.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Keep the hands on the bottom bar until you feel safe to remove them. This move can be performed with both or one hand on the bar.

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Ankle Hang would be a good alternative
- ⇒ Different entry point from Side Straddle

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Perform this move in a combination for example, Delilah to Candlestick to Walking Man or Angel, Reverse Angel, Walking Man
- ⇒ This move can also be performed as the finishing position to an Iron Fanny Roll

ANKLE HANG



SHOULDER SPOT



HUG SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Pre-requisites for this move are Birds Nest and Straddle Mount. Students should be able to hold the Straddle Position prior to attempting this move. It can also help to have conditioned the ankles to some extent through moves such as Angel, Reverse Angel and Birds Nest.

1. Start from the Birds Nest position (this can be from Hocks or Star On The Bar).
2. Pull the hips back to the mid-point (as if you are dismounting) so they are sitting just under the bottom bar.
3. Bring the hands in between the legs on the bottom bar in an overhand grip.
4. Ensure the feet are flexed and locked behind the side bars of the hoop and that the student is pushing their legs straight to provide pressure against the side bars.
5. If this position feels safe, try removing one or both hands from the bottom bar and let the body hang downwards.
6. To dismount, place the hands back on between the legs and perform a straddle dismount.

An alternative mount for this move would be to start from a Straddle mount position under the bar then pop the feet up and through the hoop.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Make sure the feet are flexed to create a safe lock on the side bars.
- ✓ This lock can be increased by straightening the legs and pushing them backwards into the hoop.
- ✓ Ensure the hips are high to the bottom bar, this will help create a comfortable ankle position (allowing them to sit slightly higher up the hoop) this should naturally happen from the Birds Nest but may need to be corrected if you are mounting from a Straddle position.
- ✓ This is a move where the right size hoop will really help students feel more secure as a narrower circle will use the quadriceps more whereas a larger hoop will require you to push outwards engaging the abductors which are generally weaker muscles.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

There are two strong spots for this position, hugging the hips or cupping the shoulders. Both are valid options. Ensure students retain a hollow spine when learning this move as this will protect the head neck and shoulders if the student was to slip out.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Discomfort due to the grip point on the ankle: This will require some conditioning. Encourage students to keep their hands on until they feel comfortable in this position. If students do have ankle issues, get them to avoid this move and Walking Man if they find it aggravates the problem. Changing the height can also change the pressure point – so students may be able to work around discomfort by adjusting the height of their legs on the side bars.

Fear of ‘hanging down’: Some students will not want to let go of their hand grip. Ensure a spotter is present and supporting the student as they lower into and lift out of this move at all times.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Students can practise the prep of this move by getting the grip right from Birds Nest or Straddle without taking hands off the bottom bar

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Walking Man is a great alternative as it provides a similar shape
- ⇒ Alternative entry point from Straddle
- ⇒ Alternative dismount options include a Straddle dismount, a Hocks Hang position or returning to Birds Nest

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Good combinations include combining this move with an Angel or Reverse Angel
- ⇒ Students can also practise adding this to the end of a Pop Off when they feel comfortable (Straddle Pop Off and Pike Pop Off are both possible)

SINGLE HOCKS HANG



LIGHT GRIP SPOT (ANKLE) & SHOULDER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Pre-requisites for this move are Double Hocks Hang, Delilah, Open Delilah and Splits Under The Bar. Students will need a minimum of two of the above moves to ensure they have options for both entry and exit from this position.

FROM DOUBLE HOCKS HANG

1. Start in a strong Double Hocks Hang, making sure the glutes and the hamstrings are engaged.
2. Transferring the weight into one knee, straighten the other leg reaching the toes towards the ceiling.
3. Take the leg to the side sweeping the side bar of the hoop.
4. From the side point, rotate through the hip until the leg is directly behind you.
5. To dismount, reverse the above movement until you are back in the Double Hocks Hang.
6. Repeat this move on the other side.

FROM SPLITS UNDER THE BAR

1. From a Splits Under The Bar position, hocks the front knee onto the bottom bar, ensuring you have a good grip by engaging the glute and hamstring.
2. The other leg should be straight and directly behind the body.
3. Slowly release the hand grip, lowering the torso down towards the floor maintaining the leg shape throughout.
4. To dismount, reach up with either both hands to return to the Splits Under The Bar prep position, or with one hand to achieve a Delilah/Open Delilah position.
5. Repeat this move on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Try and keep the hips squared and level as you transition the leg from the Double Hocks Hang. This will help stabilise the posture.
- ✓ Make sure the supporting leg is creating a strong hocks at all times. Do not allow the foot to creep upwards or the hips to sit backwards.
- ✓ As the leg extends and rotates into the full position it is possible to bring the leg forwards or to turn the leg out on the rotation. This is not advised when starting to teach this move, until the strength has increased and students are confident in this move.
- ✓ It can be beneficial to condition this exercise at a beginners level with hocks drills (pointing one foot then the other foot up towards the ceiling) you can also use strops over the bottom bar as an extra form of support when training this move.
- ✓ Make sure you stretch after performing repeated Single Hocks Hangs to ensure that the hamstrings and adductors do not become shortened.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

This move can be spotted by spotting the ankle (being careful not to apply excessive pressure – only provide a ceiling in this spot) or by supporting under the shoulders – this will allow you to retain a good stream of communication with the student as you will be facing them. Students may need a guidance spot into or out of this move.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Discomfort – many students find Single Hocks Hang uncomfortable due to the amount of pressure it places on the back of the knee. Encourage students to work up to this move slowly and progressively, starting with Double Hocks Hang, then moving onto Single Hocks Hang Conditioning drills (with then without strops) to build up to the full version of the move.

Balance – some students will find the transition phase into the Single Hocks Hang difficult to counter balance. This may be because they are either not strong enough on the supporting side or they are bringing the leg forwards rather than sideways and around into the hang. If both of these elements have been corrected, then try a different entry to the move such as from Splits Under the Bar.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Double Hocks Hang ⇒ Single Hocks Hang Conditioning Drills (with or without the use of strops) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Leg variations – locked Single Hocks Hang ⇒ other leg variations include the free leg crossed over the Hocked leg, or the heel of the free leg on the bottom bar (Talon Hang) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Starting in a Delilah or Open Delilah position ⇒ Combinations such as Splits Under The Bottom Bar to Single Hocks Hang to Single Hocks Mount

HINTS AND TIPS

Watch students' hip positioning as they work on their Single Hocks – check to see if the hips are remaining level as they lift the leg and transition it around the side of the hoop. If the hip is dropping, they are losing engagement in their core and placing more pressure on the single knee that is supporting the body.

PIKE IN THE HOOP



LEG SPOT
(PREVENTS SKIN THE CAT)

BABY CRADLE

HIP SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

As a pre-requisite, Students should have a strong, lifted Pike Mount on the bottom bar before attempting this move.

1. From sitting in the hoop, place both hands onto the top bar shoulder width apart.
2. Pushing backwards off the top bar, lift the knees up towards the chest in a tucked position
3. Let the head and shoulders drop back until the arms are long and you are able to feed the feet under the top bar to achieve the pike position in the hoop.
4. To dismount, tuck the knees back into the chest and as you feed the feet back under the top bar, pull up with the arms changing the grip from long arm to short arm allowing you to sit back into the hoop.
5. Alternative mounts to the Pike in Hoop include a long arm beat in front of the hoop to lift under the top bar and leaning back to a long arm grip from sitting allowing you to place one or both feet on the top bar and push up to Pike.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Make sure the thumbs are always wrapped around the bar to provide the hands with a 'lock'.
- ✓ When working on the top bar it is preferable to work in an overhand grip to ensure your wrists are correctly aligned.
- ✓ Make sure when pulling up in your arms, you are engaging your shoulders and actively pulling them back and down into the 'square' position.
- ✓ Engage your abdominals when lifting to help support your lower back.
- ✓ The transition from short arm to long arm grip will help to bring the hips over the shoulders into an inverted position.
- ✓ If attempting to hold the Pike position in the hoop at any stage ensure the hips stay at the same level or only slightly above the shoulders, the arms should be straight at this point but the shoulders should be engaged, do not let the hips come too far through under the top bar or the student may lose control and perform a 'Skin the Cat' dismount.
- ✓ Try to encourage a relaxed level of tension in a Pike position; this will stop the hoop from shaking.
- ✓ Ensure students have the strength to both mount and dismount this move safely before it is attempted. It can be beneficial to also check their technique in this move on the bottom bar.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

From a spotting point of view it is preferable to teach this move on a sitting height hoop. This gives you a better base to spot from, greater access to support the student and saves the student performing a 'double mount' as they can start from a sitting position in the hoop to save strength. Support the hips but also be aware that you may need to change the hand position if the student starts to 'Skin the Cat'.

COMMON PROBLEMS

To be able to lift into a pike position in the hoop requires a great deal of strength. Students will often struggle with this to start. To begin, students can use a see-saw motion to help create momentum to help the lift. They can also try to get a foot on the top bar to push through to pike position, or use beats in front of the hoop to help. Although Pike mount in the hoop is harder to cheat (using a push off the floor) there is technically more space due to the top bar of the hoop curving upwards rather than downwards into the space the feet need to feed through.

Dismounting onto the bottom bar requires the transition from a long arm to a short arm grip to achieve a seated position in the hoop. If students miss the bottom bar because they are unable to achieve the short arm grip again a beat can be used to lift back into the hoop. Ensure they also know an emergency dismount from this position in case they are unable to get back into the hoop and have a spotter on hand to assist.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Using the feet on top bar to push off to achieve the Pike position

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Beat in front of the hoop to Pike Mount

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Lifting into the Pike position from sitting
- ⇒ Lifting into Pike position with straight legs from hanging

⇒ Pike Mount on the bottom bar	⇒ Alternative shape in the hoop such as Splits Under The Top Bar	⇒ Combinations such as Pike to Hocks Hang on the top bar
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DELILAH ON TOP



SHOULDER SPOT (SITTING HEIGHT HOOP) HOOP & REASSURANCE SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Students should be confident with Man In The Moon and Delilah on the bottom bar in numerous variations before attempting this move. They will also need to have developed single leg strength in both legs to initiate this movement.

1. Start in a Man in the Moon position. Ensure your feet are the correct way around (the bottom foot will be the one that is pushing the hips upwards, the top foot is the one that is hooking onto the top bar).

2. From this position, the hands should be in an opposing grip just above the head. Ensuring you have a good grip, push through the bottom foot lifting the hips as high as you can off the bottom bar.
3. Take the top foot off the side bar; straighten the leg reaching the toes to the ceiling on the outside of the hoop until the knee is in line with the top bar.
4. At this point, hocks the back of the knee as close to the rigging point as you can.
5. Take the bottom foot and change the foot position so that the top of the ankle is now resting on the side bar allowing you to apply pressure and slide this foot down the side bar of the hoop.
6. The same principle can be applied with the torso, arching the back the shoulder can slide down the side bar ensuring you keep good contact with the hands.
7. To dismount, replace the bottom foot and using the pressure against the side bar unhook the top leg and slowly lower the hips back down onto the bottom bar into a Man In The Moon position.
8. Repeat on the other leg.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the top knee has a secure grip close to the rigging point and that this is actively engaged by pulling the foot down towards the floor.
- ✓ The hands should always be on the opposite side of the rigging point to the knee grip. If working on a double point hoop, the knee grip should be inside the rigging points, whereas the hand grip should either straddle a rigging point or be on the outside of it.
- ✓ With the back foot and shoulder, ensure you are applying outwards pressure to fill the hoop and secure the position.
- ✓ When you start training this move, keeping the back foot on can help when it comes to dismounting, as you are unable to see the hoop and so if you lose contact with this foot, it can be hard to find it.
- ✓ Keep at least one hand on in the Delilah position, it can be done without hands but this is an advanced move and the hand can help create the grip at the shoulder by pulling into the side bar.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

Spot the back and shoulder position if you are able to reach the student in the hoop – alternatively, if the student is working at height a reassurance spot of holding the bottom bar will be beneficial.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Pushing hips up: Some students find it very difficult to push their hips up high enough to get the back of the top knee securely hocked onto the top bar. This movement (pushing up on one leg) can be practised in a reverse plank position on the floor and the preparation for the move can be practise from the Man In The Moon can be practised without gripping the knee onto the top bar.

Top knee slipping: If the top knee is not hocked close to the rigging point on a single point hoop, this knee can slide down the side bar causing the student to feel unsafe. Before progressing onto the next stages, ensure this knee is hocked on securely by the rigging point.

Removal of the back foot: Students are often tempted to remove the back foot and straighten the back leg, therefore making the move difficult to dismount. If this does occur, they are often unable to find the side bar with the back foot to apply pressure to return to Man In The Moon. Encourage them to

switch the back foot from the ball of the foot to the front of the ankle rather than remove it for ease of transition into and out of this move. Alternatively, offer them a different dismount such as a lower to Iron Fanny.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Practise Delilah position on bottom bar
- ⇒ Practise pushing upwards from Man In The Moon – without gripping the knee

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Keep both hands on the side bar of the hoop
- ⇒ Remove one hand
- ⇒ Delilah on top with back leg straight

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Different dismounts (into Wineglass or Iron Fanny)
- ⇒ Advanced Progression: Hands off Delilah On Top

HOCKS HANG – TOP BAR



GRIP SPOT (ANKLES)



SHOULDER SPOT



GUIDANCE TO DISMOUNT



TEACHING POINTS

As a pre-requisite for this move, students should have a good Hocks Hang on the bottom bar. It can also be beneficial for students to have a Single Hocks Hang on both legs on the bottom bar, this will help you and them feel safe actively engaging both knees individual on the top bar.

1. From a Pike in the Hoop, hocks both legs on behind the knee onto the top bar of the hoop.
2. From this position, ensure you have a good grip with the backs of your knees, by pulling the feet towards the bottom and that the knees are narrow either side of the rigging point.
3. Slowly slide the hands down the side bars of the hoop and lower the torso until you are hanging in the hoop from the backs of the knees.
4. At this point, take the arms behind the hoop and extend them out wide to create a lock with the hoop.
5. To dismount, bring the arms back through, place the hands on the side bar and slide them back up the hoop until they reach the top bar, then perform a Pike Dismount to sitting off the top bar.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ This move varies greatly from the same position on the bottom bar. If working on a single point hoop a side to side steering action can happen if a greater pressure is applied through one knee or one knee is significantly wider. On a double point hoop you may encounter front to back tipping. Students should be aware of this and of how to control this movement using their body weight.
- ✓ Ensure the feet are actively creating the knee grip by pulling them back to the bottom (pointing the toes towards the floor can help, as can pulling the toes together which can help counteract the curvature of the top bar) keeping the knees narrow can also help the grip.
- ✓ Make sure all movement in and out of the Hocks Hang position is slow and controlled to save unwanted momentum.
- ✓ The arms can be behind or in front of the hoop, behind the bottom bar can provide an additional lock which can be beneficial especially on a double point hoop. This lock is similar to that used in a Shoulder Stand position later on.
- ✓ Make sure if performing this move on a double point hoop, students are aware that removing their hand grip from the hoop may result in a tipping motion in this move. Students should instead attempt to keep hands in contact with the side/bottom bar at all times but sliding the hand grip upwards and downwards.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

Make sure a spot is provided as students transition into and out of this move. A hip spot is often most effective depending on the height of the hoop. Again, the risk of Skin The Cat is present as students dismount so make sure you are in a position to correct the student if this does occur.

On a sitting height hoop, similar spots can be used to Hocks Hang on the bottom bar, including a grip spot and shoulder spot.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Feeling unsafe in the knee grip: This can occur for a number of reasons, firstly; if students are not actively pulling their feet towards their bottom creating the grip it can feel unsafe, secondly; if the knees are too wide apart therefore coming into contact with the bar at a greater point of curvature this can also result

in feeling unstable. Encourage students to bring the knees together, close to the rigging point and to actively squeeze this area to create the grip.

Safe dismounting. Students often find they are able to perform some version of a Pike Mount onto the top bar but struggle with the arm and abdominal strength needed to return to sitting from this move. Ensure prior to learning this move, students have practised a range of beneficial conditioning moves such as short arm hangs on the bottom bar or knee raises on bottom bar.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
⇒ Hocks Hang on bottom bar (easier alternative)	⇒ Hocks Hang on bottom bar ⇒ Shoulder Stand ⇒ Arms behind hoop to create lock or arms in front of hoop to remove the lock	⇒ Progress by combining Hocks hang with Scarab forwards or backwards or with Shoulder Stand combinations

SCARAB – FORWARDS & BACKWARDS



GRIP (ANKLES) AND SHOULDER SPOT



HOOP AND SHOULDER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Students should be confident in Hocks Hang on both the bottom bar and the top bar before attempting this move. It is vital to ensure students have a secure knee grip and are confident moving the hands up and down the side bars in this position.

1. From a Hocks Hang position on the top bar, ensure the feet are squeezing tightly towards the bottom.
2. Take the arms behind your head then grab the hoop with the hands shoulder width apart.
3. Push the bar in front of you, tucking your head through the hoop and arching your back taking you into a Forwards Scarab.
4. For a Backwards Scarab, start again from the Hocks Hang position, slide the hands down the side bars until they are at approximately 5pm and 7pm and push the hoop behind you.
5. For more flexible students, the Backwards Scarab can be performed with the hands in the overhead position to increase the arch in the back/shoulders.
6. To dismount from either position return to the Hocks Hang and slide the hands up the side bars of the hoops allowing you to perform a Pike Dismount off the top bar.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the knees have a good hocks when in the Hocks Hang position (before pushing to Scarab) engaging the grip by pointing the toes down towards the floor and in towards each other to engage the hamstrings. This grip must be maintained when pushing out to Scarab.
- ✓ Ensure the push is only as far as is comfortable for that student. To create a smaller arch, have the hands lower down the hoop putting less pressure on the lower back or take the move to a larger hoop.
- ✓ Ensure the back is sufficiently warmed up before attempting Scarabs.
- ✓ The abdominals should always be engaged in a Scarab to ensure they are supporting the arch in the lower back.
- ✓ It can be safer to test this position with the forwards push as the bar is still in sight, before progressing onto the back arch and if students have the necessary flexibility the back arch can be progressed to reaching over the head for a greater curve. This progression is only suitable for students that have the required flexibility.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

It is beneficial to initially teach this move on a sitting height hoop so that a spot can be applied to the hocks, providing a ceiling over the ankles. Ensure that this is a light spot, rather than a heavy spot which can make the knee grip uncomfortable and can also pressure the ankle joint.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Losing knee grip: Similar to Hocks Hang, this move requires an active knee grip; ensure the same safety points are applied. The grip may change slightly as you transition the hoop forwards/backwards – double point hoops will ‘tip’ or flatten in this transition, ensure students are aware of how their body weight/hocks position will affect the movement of the hoop prior to attempting this move.

Not getting a good arched shape: Lots of students will find flexibility an issue in this move. To achieve a strong Scarab, students need to be arching the back and at the same time pushing the side bars. This

firstly requires a degree of back flexibility and secondly a degree of shoulder flexibility, both will help make this move more confident.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Hocks Hang ⇒ Forwards Scarab is the easiest of all of the Scarab family and a good starting point 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Forwards or Backwards Scarab ⇒ Overhead push in Backwards Scarab for flexible students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Single Leg Scarab ⇒ Combining Forwards to Backwards Scarab

SPLITS IN THE HOOP



HOOP SPOT



SHOULDER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

The pre-requisite for this move would be a strong Splits Under The Bar, many students actually prefer this move on the top bar due to the additional height offered. It can also be beneficial to know Hocks On Top as an additional entry/exit point.

1. Hands at hip width on the top bar again, fingers over thumbs under and locked, both at an equal distance from the mid-point of the rigging point of the hoop.
2. Lift as if you are Pike Mounting but keep one leg bent and feed this leg under the top bar of the hoop and split the legs.
3. At this stage push the hips and chest forward until the hips are directly underneath the top bar with the shoulder blades squeezed together and the chest pushing forwards between the hands.
4. The legs should be in a 'splits' position with one leg in front of the hoop and one leg behind. The back leg can be resting on the top bar if necessary.
5. To dismount from this position, return the way you came up feeding the front leg back between the hands, at the same time pulling up in the arms to return to the sit position in the hoop.
6. Alternatively bring the back leg through the hands into the Pike Mount position on the top bar and continue on.
7. Repeat on the other leg.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the hands have a strong, locked grip on the top bar as this move does put pressure on the hand grip. Both hands should be gripping an equal distance from the rigging point if working on a single point hoop, to minimise tipping.
- ✓ Shoulders engaged with both arms active will also help the balance point.
- ✓ Ensure the hips and chest are pushed forwards, as this can help stabilise the move stopping the student from tipping out of it. Engaging the glutes will help push the hips forward and squeezing the shoulder blades together will open up the chest as will looking forwards to align the neck.
- ✓ Letting the back leg make contact with the top bar can also help to stabilise the hoop and is a great variation. Holding the split free of the bar requires a greater level of strength and control and should be introduced when students are ready to progress.
- ✓ On a double point hoop, this move is more stable with the hands placed on the outside of the rig points, but inside the rig points is also an option if the hoop is stable enough.
- ✓ Make sure the hands are hip distance apart or slightly wider as this can impede the full extension of the hips and the chest as they will be restricted from coming between the arms.
- ✓ If students do feel like they are tipping down, encourage them to hock one knee on to stop a full dismount this can then be transitioned into a hocks hang and dismounted as normal.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

A stabilisation of the bottom bar can help stabilise this move and is often more effective than trying to spot the student. At height the only effective spot that can be applied is to the shoulder position.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Students often struggle to get one leg between the hands: Again this relates back to the Pike Mount where the hips can often be too high making it difficult to feed the leg under the bar. Try and encourage students to drop the hips slightly, feeding the knee through first can also help. If struggling students can push off the top bar with one foot or enter the position from a Hocks Hang by moving both hands around one knee and taking the other leg off and back behind the hoop

Extension: Students often find it hard to extend into the full, stable position. This can be because hands are too close together or because students are pushing with just the hips and not opening up through the chest. It can help to assist a student through the first few attempts of this move to get into a comfortable position.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Practise the same move on the bottom bar to gain confidence

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Splits Under The Bottom Bar
- ⇒ Crab In Hoop
- ⇒ Mexican In Hoop

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Combinations such as Splits In Hoop to Single Hocks
- Shoulder Stand to Half Back
- Balance or Splits In Hoop to Crab in Hoop to Mexican

HOCKS SPLIT



HOOP & SHOULDER SPOT

HIP SPOT

SHOULDER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Students should be confident in both the entry/exit points for this move as a pre-requisite; Hocks Hang and Splits Under The Bar.

FROM A HOCKS HANG

1. Get into a Hocks Hang position on the top bar without removing the hand grip and ensuring you have a good hocks grip
2. Move one hand from the outside to the inside of the knee grip ensuring both hands still have a good overhand grip.
3. At this stage, ensure both hands are still an equal distance from the rigging point or centre of the top bar to stabilise the hoop.
4. The leg that is now free of the hand grip; straighten this leg and keeping pressure against the hoop, rotate through the hip and circle it downwards until the toes are pointing towards the floor.
5. At this stage transfer into a long arm grip, lean backwards and arch the back into the Hocks Split.
6. To dismount, pull the torso back in, circle the straight leg back up until it reaches the top bar then hocks on again. The hand can then be moved back onto the outside of the knee to perform a Pike dismount.
7. Repeat on the other side.

FROM SPLITS UNDER THE BAR

1. From a Splits under the Bar position, hock the front knee onto the top bar.
2. Keep the hands at shoulder width in an overhand grip with the thumbs locked.
3. Bring the back leg forwards, feeding the leg through from the back to the front of the hoop by feeding the knee between the arm and the side bar then extending the leg.
4. Once the leg is straight, keep pressure against the hoop, rotate through the hip and circle it downwards until the toes are pointing towards the floor.
5. At this stage transfer into a long arm grip, lean backwards and arch the back into the Hocks Split.
6. To dismount back to Splits under the Bar, keeping the bottom leg vertical, bend through this knee to slide the leg off the bottom bar taking it behind the hoop again allowing you to push back to the Splits position. This would be an alternative way into this move.
7. Repeat on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Make sure the hands are locked on in an over hand grip using the thumbs as a lock.
- ✓ Ensure that the shoulders are engaged when in the fully extended position.
- ✓ The knee should be hocked as close to the rigging point as possible, to remove any risk of slipping down the curvature of the side bar.
- ✓ It is possible to straighten the top knee into an Extended Hocks Splits, but this is a progression of the move that should not be attempted when the move is first learnt, as the body can slip downwards making it hard to re hocks the knee back onto the top bar.
- ✓ Try to ensure the hands are equally spaced from the rigging point, regardless of which leg is gripped, this will help stop the hoop from rotating to one side. This is paramount on a single point hoop.
- ✓ When performing this move on a double point hoop be conscious that the narrower the hand grip – the more the hoop will tip horizontally.
- ✓ Ensure the transition into and out of the move is done slowly and with control, staying in contact with the hoop at all times.
- ✓ If students are struggling to rotate through the hip, lifting through the arms to raise the chest making the body more vertical will make this transition easier.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

Similar to a Reverse Figurehead, this move is difficult to spot as students are leaning off the back of the hoop with their entire body on one side of the hoop. For this reason, a low hoop is recommended for initial teaching where an effective hip spot or shoulder spot can be provided – drawing the student's hips into your core. A reassurance spot stabilising the hoop and cupping one shoulder can also be used.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Transitioning into the full position: Students can often find it difficult to sweep the leg around the hoop like a clock face. It can help to pull up through the arms so that the body is more vertical, reducing the pressure on the hoop. The other option would be from Splits under the Bar to hocks the front leg on then to simply bend the back leg so the foot is on the same side of the hoop then extend this leg straight.

Being off centre: Some students will find they are off centre in this move, try to ensure that the hands are spaced evenly from the rigging point regardless of which side of the rig the knee is on and that the knee is as close to the rigging point as possible.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Practising the pre-requisite moves of Hocks On Top and Splits Under The Top Bar

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Try the move on both legs
- ⇒ Try both entry and exit points to the move

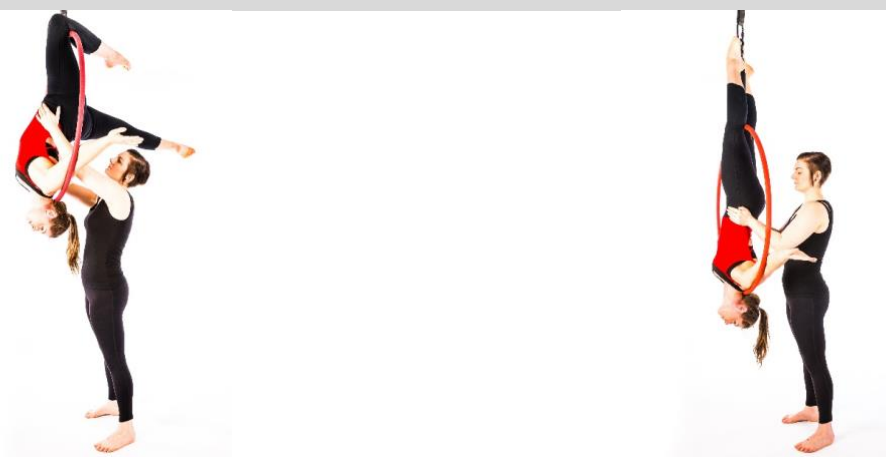
PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Advanced Progression: Extended Hocks Splits
- ⇒ Combination with top bar moves (for example, Hocks Hang into Hocks Splits into Splits Under The Bar)
- ⇒ Combination with sliding down into Half Back Balance

SHOULDER STAND



HIP SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Students should be comfortable with a Hocks Hang and Splits Under the Bar. It will also help if they have tried Hocks Hang position with the arms locked behind the hoop (to understand the shoulder positioning and also to help check they are using the right size hoop).

1. From Splits Under The Top Bar, hock one knee on.
2. Keeping the knee hooked securely on the top bar slide the hands down the side bars until the shoulders meet the bottom bar.
3. To create a lock, take the take the arms behind the side bars and re-grip in a thumbs up position.
4. When the positioning on the top of the shoulders feels comfortable the hands can be removed.
5. From here the Shoulder Stand can be performed in a number of leg variations; one leg hocked; both legs in a 'Pencil' position; and straddle legs for a Shoulder Stand Straddle.
6. To dismount, ensure the front leg is hocked back on again safely, release the arm lock and slide the hands up the side bar and return to a Splits Under the Bar position.

7. An alternative mount would be from a Hocks Hang, slide the hands down to create the arm lock then thread one leg through to the back of the hoop. Reverse to exit.
8. Repeat with the other leg in front of the hoop.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ When sliding down from the Hocks Hang position the shoulders must come into contact with the bottom bar before the shoulder stand is attempted, if this does not happen then students should be moved onto a smaller hoop.
- ✓ The leg positions are progressive therefore students should become comfortable with each stage before moving on, as the latter leg positions place more weight into the shoulders and also require a greater degree of balance and core strength to stabilise.
- ✓ Make sure students are always rewrapping their hand grip before transitioning between leg positions.
- ✓ It's important to retain good posture when performing shoulder stands. It's easy to let the hips drop out the back of the hoop and lose core control – this can affect the balance of the move, making it unsafe.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

For spotting technique for this move, it can help to support a tall posture, so a hip spot would be the most appropriate (height dependent) to ensure the hips remain in the hoop above the shoulders. You can also help a student balance in the more challenging leg variations from this position.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Too much pressure on the shoulders: Some students will find shoulder stands put too much pressure through their shoulders. Get them to try the Single Hocks position as this takes some of the weight out of the shoulders or practise putting the shoulders on the hoop in a Hocks Hang position to get used to the feeling. The balance point should be on the top of the shoulders, avoiding the neck and using the core to support the positions.

Balance in the harder leg positions: It's important to keep the hips directly above the shoulders and directly under the rigging point to keep the balance within the hoop. Dropping the hip position back or a lack of adequate core engagement will cause students to feel unstable.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Hocks Hang position with the shoulders placed on the bottom bar

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Alternative leg in Single Hocks Shoulder Stand
- ⇒ Stag both legs in Single Hocks Shoulder Stand

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Pencil or Straddle leg positions
- ⇒ Combinations such as Single Hocks Shoulder Stand to Half Back Balance

CRUCIFIX



HUG SPOT (INCLUDING DISMOUNT)



TEACHING POINTS

As a pre-requisite for this move, students will need to be comfortable with a minimum of two back balances. It can also be beneficial to have recapped a 'Y' arm grip.

1. From a Back Balance position place the hands approx. a third of the way up the side bars.
2. Dropping the legs towards the floor, allow the body to tip forwards lifting the chest upright.
3. Engaging the shoulder blades and keeping the arms in a 'W' position, let the bottom bar slide up the back until it meets the base of the shoulder blades.
4. At this point, lock the arms by pushing them forwards behind the bottom bar, lift the chest up towards the ceiling and create tension throughout the body to hold the Crucifix position.
5. To dismount, place the hands back on in the 'W' shape, slide the hands back up the side bars as high as you can, re-grip the hands at the top point in a thumbs up grip.

This should allow you to push backwards off the side bars of the hoop and release the elbows and slide out the front of the hoop in a 'Y' arm grip position.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Do not allow the bottom bar to slide too far up the back, this will result in an uncomfortable Crucifix which proves difficult to dismount.
- ✓ Ensure the shoulder blades are engaged in the square position at all times when transitioning into and holding the Crucifix and when dismounting the position.
- ✓ Make sure the elbows are dropped in the W position behind the hoop when transitioning into this move to help control the movement into the position.
- ✓ Engaging through the pectoral muscles and lifting the chest to the ceiling can also help.
- ✓ When transitioning into the Crucifix position arching through the back will help keep the spine from making excessive contact with the bottom bar.
- ✓ Make sure the transition into and out of this move is slow and controlled and that students retain enough energy for a safe dismount.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot this position, it can be useful to provide a 'shelf' to pause the slide at the correct moment. This could be through lowering the hoop (so that the student can touch the floor to stop the slide) it could be the spotter in a kneeling position using their thigh as a shelf or the spotter assuming a hug position on the legs. These are all also positions that could be used as a guidance spot for the dismount if necessary.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Sliding too far: Many students find that when transitioning into the Crucifix position, they slide past the holding point and up into their armpits. Encourage a slow transition to avoid this, taking some of the weight through the hands and leaning the torso back to control the movement. When they find the comfortable point (lower to mid shoulder blade) it's important the lock is created immediately so that this situation is avoided. A low Crucifix is very difficult to dismount and can cause injury.

Dismounting: Sliding the arms up the hoop in the 'W' position then pushing back off the side bars of the hoop will help students to achieve a safe dismount from this position releasing the elbows and allowing students to take a Y grip to lower their body weight down to the ground. If a student does become 'stuck' then aiding them by lifting their legs partially and taking some weight out of the move can help – see above for potential spotting positions.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Crucifix keeping hands on hoop in W position

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Leg variations in the Crucifix; one leg bent, one straight; both straight or both legs bent into a prayer position

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Advanced Progression: Grabbing back legs (Yogini)
- ⇒ Back Balance Combinations
- ⇒ Releasing from a Crucifix into an Elbow Hang position

HIP HOLD

BALL



PIKE



STRADDLE



HUG SPOT



SHOULDER SPOT



BALANCE SPOT: ANKLE



TEACHING POINTS

Students should be confident with Splits Under The Bar and Candlestick before attempting this move. It can also be beneficial to have practised the Half Hip Hold position from Pull Over to Front Balance to understand the pressure point for this move. Ensure this is conditioned on both hips.

1. Start in a Splits Under The Bar position on the bottom bar.
2. Lift the hips as high as possible towards the bar then fold the back leg over the top of the bottom bar.
3. Keeping the hands on, find a comfortable leg position (crossed at the knee or pike) with the bottom bar resting in the hip of the back leg. A slight rotation through the hips can help adjust the position.
4. If this feels safe, the hands can be removed. Keep pulling the legs down towards the floor to create a balance point on the inside line of the hip.
5. To dismount, place the hands back on either side of the front leg and return to the Splits under the Bar position.
6. Repeat on the other side.

Alternative dismounts include placing the hands to the side of the hips in an opposing grip then allowing the body to rotate to a Delilah, Candlestick or Side Straddle position.

An alternative mount for this move would be to start from a Front Balance Fold, then take one leg through to the other side of the hoop then reverse to dismount. Hip Holds can also start in a Candlestick position rotating towards the side of the top leg so that the bar is balancing on the hip on the base leg.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ This move can be uncomfortable on the hip. Allow students to condition this position at their own pace. A great way of conditioning this move is to practise a half hip hold - placing pressure into a single hip by extending one leg straight up from a Front Balance Fold. The hands can then be used to support the position as the student adjusts the leg to place the weight comfortably on the inside line of the hip. Both hips should be conditioned.
- ✓ Make sure the hip has a secure lock on the hoop. The bottom bar should be locked on the inside of the hip flexor of the back leg. The feet should remain below the horizontal line of the bottom bar and some students may feel safer if they tuck the knee in towards the chest to create the grip.
- ✓ Don't allow students to take their hands off until they feel safe in their leg grip.
- ✓ Ensure the folded position is retained at all times; unfolding can cause students to feel insecure as if they are going to tip out of the move and also can shift the grip point.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

The easiest way to spot this position is to stand at the side bar supporting the hips over the back of the thighs. This will allow you to help students adjust into the position but most importantly stop them from rotating out. As students become more comfortable with the position a wider variety of spotting positions can be used as pictured above.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Pressure on the hip flexor: As the bar is resting on the back hip the body weight is drawing downwards. The bar should sit on the inside line of the hip flexor but some students will struggle to get this placement correct rolling onto the hip flexor and making this move uncomfortable. Encourage them to try the position with both hands on before attempting the full Hip Hold.

Balance: Some students may feel like they are likely to tip out of this position. It's important to encourage them to draw the legs down towards the floor, folding at the hip bringing the legs towards the torso to create a hang over the bottom bar.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Splits Under The Bar as a prep position for this move
- ⇒ Hip Hold with hands on the bottom bar

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Leg variations; ball, crossed knee or pike position with the legs

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Straddle Hip Hold
- ⇒ Advanced Progression: Splits Hip Hold (Jade)
- ⇒ Combinations such as Splits Under The Bar, Pike Hip Hold roll to Candlestick

REVERSE SPLITS AWAY



GUIDANCE SPOTS FOR DISMOUNT



TEACHING POINTS

Students should have achieved the Splits Away and Owl positions prior to attempting this move. It will also be beneficial to have done some conditioning work on the front of the Ankle to help students understand the pressure point.

1. Starting in an Owl position, place your hands in an overhand grip on the top bar shoulder width apart.
2. Change one foot so that the front of the ankle is resting on the bottom bar.
3. Lifting up through your arms, drop your body out of the front of the hoop.
4. Push the hoop backwards and away from you using the back leg until you are fully extended in the Reverse Splits Away position.
5. When you are ready to come out of the move, pull the hoop back towards you using the back leg, pulling upwards through the arms to lift the hip position and return to either sitting on the bottom bar or to an Owl position.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the shoulders are fully engaged in the hanging position pulling up through the arms and lifting the chest.
- ✓ The core should also be engaged throughout this move to help support the arch in the lower back.
- ✓ The back foot can be flexed to ensure that you do not lose the bottom bar.
- ✓ If the foot does slip out then the bottom bar will make unwanted contact with the lower back/hips hence a spotter here is vital.
- ✓ The exit from this move is very challenging. Ensure students retain enough strength to pull back into the hoop. If students get into difficulty then a spotter should be present to hold the bottom bar as they perform an emergency dismount out of the front of the hoop.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

This is a challenging move to spot. The most common need for a spot is a guidance spot to dismount the move, this can be with a forearm across the front of the hips, or giving them something to push the front foot off – either a knee or hands – to push back into the hoop. Both of these options will help take some of the pull out of the arms making it easier to dismount.

COMMON PROBLEMS

This move can prove uncomfortable on the back ankle. If students feel discomfort, the temptation is to point the foot and allow it to slip out of the hoop. This is not advised as the flexion in the foot not only helps to control the bottom bar keeping it away from the lower back it also provides a pull when attempting to dismount the move back into the hoop. The foot can be changed to pointed as students become more advanced and confident in this move.

Dismounting. Pulling back into the hoop is very difficult from the fully extended position. It can help if students pull upwards through their arms, push upwards through the back ankle and bring the front leg in as close to the hoop as possible.

Getting full extension. To give this move a good line, students need to lift the chest, arch through the back, push as far backwards as they can through the back leg relaxing the back hip flexor. Using an active/passive stretch on this back leg (actively pushing while relaxing opposing muscles) will help achieve this.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Splits Away
- ⇒ Owl and preparing the ankle placement

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Different leg variations such as a Stag Leg or bent front leg

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Combinations such as Splits Away to Reverse Splits Away or Reverse Figurehead to Reverse Splits Away

HINTS AND TIPS

There are specific parts of your body that you will need to condition for aerial hoop. We balance and hang on various body parts including our lower back, hips, feet and ankles, armpits, elbows and hands. Conditioning these parts should be progressive so that the body has time to get used to holding the hoop in this area before you add additional weight or movement. Keeping one or both hands on during a Hip Hold, or using an elbow for support can help to gradually increase students' conditioning before progressing to the full hands-off position.

UNIT 3

INTRODUCTION TO DYNAMIC MOVEMENT

BEATING/POPPING/SPINNING

Beating, popping and spinning are all fundamental skills used on aerial hoop to initiate movement. We introduce basic spins and beats to students at a beginner's level to encourage them to embrace dynamic movement on the aerial hoop from an early stage of learning. At this foundation stage, students are encouraged to become comfortable with more complex concepts of dynamic movement such as hanging beats, pop-on and spinning to inverting.

To clarify the difference between the different concepts, beating is where a student uses a lift and subsequent drop of the body weight (for example, legs or torso) to create a swinging motion which can help you create momentum you can use to move with. 'Popping' refers to speed of movement between positions where students can take advantage of a split second that is 'weightless' to make a sudden movement. A classic example of this would be a basic 'Pop on', so from a Pike or Straddle Mount, as soon as the legs meet the hoop in the hocks position, the hands pop up as high up the hoop as possible. Spinning is where students create a circular momentum prior to mounting the hoop and performing their sequence of moves. All these actions can be used in a number of formats at a beginner to intermediate level:

1. Hanging Beats from Double Hocks Hang to sitting in the hoop

Starting in a Hocks Hang position, where the knees are secured on the bottom bar through the engagement of the glutes and the hamstrings, perform a sit up action to lift the torso and engage the core (this can be assisted using your hands on the bottom bar). From this lifted position, drop the weight of the torso allowing the arms to swing over the head (subject to adequate height) arching the back. Where possible, the arms should be straight and used as an additional lever. Use the momentum created by this swing or back beat to sit up and tap the hoop. The aim is to start with smaller swings, increasing the size of the swing as the student's confidence increases allowing them to progressively tap the hoop higher and higher up the side bars until they are able to use this swing to reach high enough to pull up to sit in one action. The core should be engaged throughout to support the momentum and ensure students are working actively, with control.

2. Hanging Beats from hanging in front of the hoop to sitting

Hanging beats begin from a hanging position in front of the hoop where the shoulders are engaged in the square position. This generally has to be off the top bar due to the height of a training hoop. The hanging beat movement starts relatively small with a swinging action initiated from a fold at the waist. The aim is to lock the legs straight and drive the heels back (engaging the glutes) to create the backwards motion, then lift the legs forwards in a pike position to allow a greater back beat on the secondary repetition. The legs can be together or apart but need to remain straight all the way down from the pivot point (the hip). The action is again initiated by lifting forwards, engaging the core then driving backwards through the bottom point of the level – the heels. As the movement becomes comfortable, it can get larger, shifting the pivot point to the shoulders involving the full body in the beat retaining a slight hollow body on the forwards momentum to engage the core. To take this into sitting in the hoop the aim is to use the momentum and at the optimal point of the swing (the top of the movement) push back off the top bar, pulling up through the arms transitioning from a long arm to short arm grip at the same time to achieve the sitting position. Ensure that the student retains a strong shoulder position throughout and you can see an active engagement of the glutes, quads, hamstrings and core to support the strong beating action.

3. Pop On (Straddle or Pike Mount)

To achieve a pop-on, students must have a strong Pike or Straddle position. From their chosen start point, the movement is initiated by a minor pull through the arms bringing the hips up to the bar. At the point the knees are hocked onto the bottom bar the major pull through the arms occurs at the top of this pull the weight is no longer in the hands allowing students to jump them up the hoop in one movement then pull up to sit. This removes any shuffling of the hands up the side bars, making the mount cleaner.

4. Spinning

We introduce the concept of spinning at a beginner's level with a floor based Spin and a Fishtail Spin. The aim of this is to get students accustomed to rotational movement, in a variety of grip variations. Students are educated how to enter into spins, dismount from them and use their core and posture/extension to control the speed during the movement. Spinning is an acquired taste and it will take many students a period of time to adjust and not get too dizzy! It will also take time for them to be able to maintain a strong posture, with an engaged shoulder and core position during (what is essentially an isometric hold) throughout the duration of the spin without disengaging the body position.

5. Spinning to Inverts/Mounts

A great progression for spinning is to encourage students to begin their spin prior to mounting the hoop. This will allow students to maintain a spin throughout the sequence they are performing. This should be approached stage by stage. Initially, students should be encouraged to practise spinning into mounts such as Pike, Straddle or Delilah Mount. Students want to create a steady, controlled momentum, then attempt to tuck and lift into the mount making a secure contact with the hoop. Straddle Mount is often the easiest option to begin with. The aim is to achieve a consistent spin, alongside a safe mount and dismount. When students have accomplished this skill, the students can progress into the hoop. Initially beginner's moves, with a number of points of contact with the hoop should be attempted, prior to progressing onto more

complex moves or sequences. Students will often find that the momentum will make some moves feel easier, yet other harder depending on the direction of the spin compared with the direction of the student.

The above concepts will take a great deal of time to perfect, and should be introduced progressively at a beginner's/intermediate level, as and when students are ready. We have discussed how each movement can begin with a reduced version and increased in size as a student's strength and confidence increases. It is however important to note at this stage that there are a number of fundamentals that cannot be forgotten when working dynamically on the hoop.

- ✓ Increased risk of injury. With momentum comes a greater risk of injury. It's fundamental that even in the basic variations of the above moves, good posture is maintained throughout. Shoulders and core must be engaged and this must not be sacrificed at any point.
- ✓ Beating should not be confused with swinging or free falling, at all times the movement is controlled and muscles engaged. This is key of the core muscles that help support the posture.
- ✓ The same applies to popping. As the movement can be aggressive it's vital to have correct shoulder engagement.
- ✓ Within a beat, it is the backwards motion or 'back beat' that creates the power. Losing posture or engagement in this phase will kill the power in the move.
- ✓ Think about using your whole body to make the beat effective, in a hanging beat from hocks, think about how you can use your arms to lengthen the lever (your torso) in a full hanging beat – think about driving your heels backwards to power the beat.
- ✓ When spinning don't be tempted to let the body drop 'loose'. Entering a disengaged position should only be done by choice, when students are confident holding an engaged body position in a variety of spins.

When basic skills have been established, progressions to these should be considered. The intermediate level is when we start to introduce the basic rolls or dynamic moves to your students. Dynamic movement on the hoop presents a number of issues including:

- ✓ Students must understand what creates the 'lock' in the move or how to create a lock to catch the end of the roll. Most of the basic rolls catch in the lock you have started in, but for the few that don't, it's vital that students understand when to make the transition.
- ✓ Students require a greater degree of strength to control the rolling movement.
- ✓ Dynamic moves are much harder to spot from an Instructor point of view as they often finish in a completely different position on the hoop rotating through one or more planes.
- ✓ Rotational movement on the hoop can take place in one of three planes – the Sagittal Plane (forwards and backwards movement such as Mill Wheels) the Frontal Plane (this is the flat plane from side bar to side bar – a seated roll over to Front Balance would be a good example of a roll in this plane) and finally the Transverse Plane (rotating the hoop is a good example of movement in the Transverse Plane – such as a Floor Spin).
- ✓ Rolling movements have a higher degree of technicality, which can increase the chance of the move going wrong if performed incorrectly.

When it comes to teaching dynamic movement on the hoop, it's important for students initially to understand beats, pops and spins. These will teach them how to use their body weight to create momentum and ensure they are comfortable with how momentum affects the movement of the hoop. Once the creation of momentum is understood, then you can start introducing more complex dynamic movement such as tips and rolls. It is important that dynamic movement is taught progressively and we have given you a progressive structure below:

Introduction to dynamic movement – beats, pops and spins. These are the foundation for all dynamic movement on the hoop and should be strongly established before progressing.

- ✓ Hanging Beats from Double Hocks to sitting in the hoop
- ✓ Hanging Beats in front of the hoop to a seated position
- ✓ Pop On Pike
- ✓ Pop On Straddle
- ✓ Basic Spins (floor spin/Fishtail)
- ✓ Spinning to Inverts/Mounts

Rolling entries or exits for moves. These are a range of mounts into moves that involve a roll or tip.

- ✓ Pull Over to Front Balance
- ✓ Seated Roll to Front Balance
- ✓ Single Hocks Mount (forwards)
- ✓ Combinations where the transition is a tip or roll such as Star on the Bar to Front Amazon, Delilah to Delilah through the hoop, Front Amazon to Mermaid or Wineglass to Arabesque. Front Balance Roll Outs also all fall into this category.

Basic Rolls. These are rolls or spins that work across a range of planes of movements but maintain the lock throughout.

- ✓ Roll to Single Leg Hocks (Mini Mill Wheel)
- ✓ Single Leg Cradle Roll
- ✓ Reverse Entry Crescent Moon Mount

Progression Rolls. These are where the lock position changes mid-roll.

- ✓ Pike Pop Off

Dynamic movements that require a higher degree of strength/technical knowledge. These require a higher degree of strength to technically execute or prior knowledge of top bar moves.

- ✓ Cradle Roll to Hocks
- ✓ Double Hocks Slide
- ✓ Single Hocks Slide

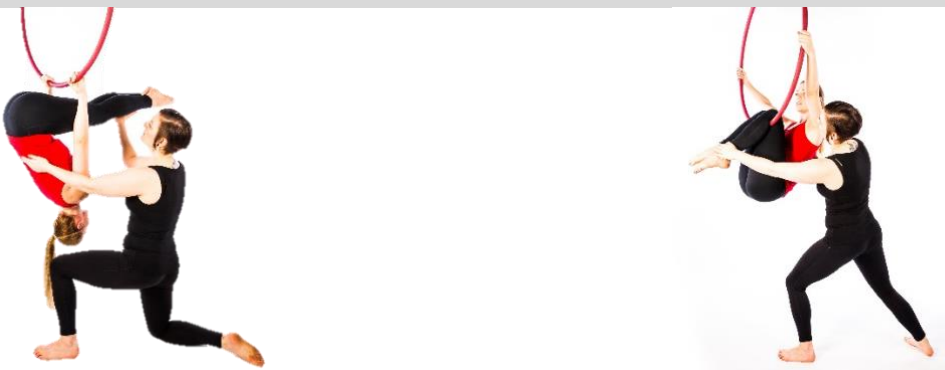
Whenever you are teaching dynamic movement, it can be beneficial to cover the 'start' and 'end' positions as a recap before going onto the full sequence. Ensure students are comfortable with both start and end points and then teach them how to move safely between them. It's important to spend a great deal of time recapping key skills, yet probably the most important one of these is exit strategies. The exit strategy generally teaches a student how to come back to a standing position, as we develop combinations and choreography we may not always use these exit methods yet it's vital to cement them in a student's memory as they are the dismount that will be used if a student feels unsafe, or uncomfortable in any position. The more advanced the move becomes, the more energy the student will use during the move. Make sure students save enough energy for a safe dismount and make sure this is something that is practised regularly. If a student is aware of all the options then they are more likely to be able to perform a safe emergency dismount if something does go wrong, rather than needing to rely on a rescue spot.

Think about when would be the best time to introduce dynamic movement to a class. It can be beneficial to do these moves earlier on in a class when students are more mentally alert and also physically prepared. When students are tired, this tends to be when technique becomes lax, students are less proprioceptive and when injuries occur. When you feel students are losing focus, move your class onto moves that they are more familiar with that are less taxing.

POP ON (PIKE)



PIKE POP ON: SPOT FEET AND BACK



STRADDLE POP ON: SPOT HOOP AND UPPER BACK



TEACHING POINTS

Students should have a strong Pike or Straddle and confident Hocks Hang before attempting this move.

1. Start in a Pike or Straddle position beneath the hoop with the hands in an overhand grip.
2. Perform a minor pull through the arms to initiate the movement, bringing the hips up towards the bar.
3. Hocks the knees onto the bar, at the same time a major pull through the arms occurs, lifting the chest towards the knees
4. At the top of this pull the weight is no longer in the hands; release the grip allowing the hands to jump up the hoop in one movement to an underhand grip on the side bar
5. Pull from a long to short arm grip, simultaneously driving through the heels to create a lever action and reach a seated position.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ A strong hocks is essential throughout this quick transition, engage the hamstrings ensuring feet are pointed, rather than flexed
- ✓ Reach the arms wide with open palms to assist the 'pop' and the transfer from overhand to underhand grip
- ✓ Keep the eye line forwards at all times, tuck the chin slightly as the hands are jumped up the hoop to create a hollow body
- ✓ Engage the core to support the lower back
- ✓ Use the quads to assist the final phase to seated, straightening one, or both legs, during the lever action to support the pull into the hoop
- ✓ Avoid shrugging the shoulders up during the transition; shoulders should remain engaged throughout.
- ✓ Thumb grip should be wrapped before and after the hand transition.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

The head and shoulders are the main priority for support in this move, however the grip can also be spotted. Spotters will need to be ready to move with their student and be careful not to impede student's movement, particularly during the grip change.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Timing the 'pop'. At first students may find the timing for the hand pop difficult or intimidating and may hesitate to allow themselves to process the sequence of movements required. To successfully complete the Pop On, very quick transitions are required, however these can be built up in stages with support from a spotter. At first students may wish to try the hand pop without pulling up to sitting, or even try testing the hand movements, one hand at a time. Ensure the upper back spotted to support the hollow body position, as this is difficult to perform slowly!

Difficulty reaching the final seated position. Students may feel once their hands are secured on the bar that they lack the strength to perform a wide arm pull up. Using one or both legs as a lever will take a lot of the pull out of the hands as will timing the pull in quick succession following the hand pop. Students

can practise the level action lowering down from a seated position and returning to sit – this can make a fun conditioning exercise performed as repeaters.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Hocks Hang⇒ Hocks Sit Ups⇒ Perform the Pop On with extra hand movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Hanging beats from Hocks⇒ Pop Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Combining actions such as Pop Ons and Pop Offs

HINTS AND TIPS

The key to a successful Pop On is in the timing of the transitions; as soon as the legs meet the hoop in the hocks position, the hands pop up as high as possible. Keeping the chest high can assist this action and save energy.

ROLL TO SINGLE HOCKS (MINI MILL WHEEL)



SHOULDER AND GRIP SPOT



PARTNER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

For this roll, it will be beneficial if students have covered Single Leg Hocks Mount and recapped how to achieve the starting position – a stable Birdie Prep Position and the end positions available including Splits Under the Bar, Delilah, Open Delilah and Single Leg Hocks Hang.

1. Start from a Birdie prep position.
2. Try to ensure the bar is resting on the back of the thigh and the hips are facing forwards.
3. Slide the hands down until they are at approximately hip height (5pm and 7pm on the hoop).
4. Ensuring the front knee is completely bent with the foot pulled up to the glutes.
5. Slowly hinge at the hips, dropping the nose to the front knee creating the momentum needed to roll forwards into a Single Leg Hocks Mount position.
6. Bracing through the arms will help to slow the roll down.

7. Keeping the head tucked, ensure the front knee is securely hocked onto the bottom bar.
8. From here, you can lower the torso backwards to perform a Single Leg Hocks Hang, or you can push back off the hooked knee to Splits Under The Bar.
9. Dismount as normal.
10. Repeat on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the front knee stays bent throughout the roll, this is the lock for this move, therefore the leg that catches in the Single Leg Hocks Hang.
- ✓ Do not take the hands too low down the side bars of the hoop, slightly higher (hip height) will allow you to feel a pull through the arms which can help you control the momentum. This can also help you place the bottom bar in the knee joint in the finish position.
- ✓ Make sure the hands are securely locked with the thumb locked around the bar.
- ✓ To increase the pace of this roll, push forward from the chest and hip position to add additional body weight.
- ✓ Ensure the knee has a secure hocks before changing position under the bottom bar.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

The spot in this roll is generally on the shoulders with the view of slowing the forwards momentum and establishing a secure knee hocks. It can be beneficial to have one spotter on each side of the hoop to perform this roll.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Students straightening the front leg: If students straighten the front leg they will not catch behind the knee. Instead, they will catch on the calf which will slide to the ankle. This is a very difficult position to dismount from so encourage students to maintain a good bend in the front knee throughout. This should be an active engagement throughout, rather than just a bend at the top of the roll.

Lack of control of momentum: To control the speed of the move, encourage students to hinge at the hip dropping the nose to the knee rather than pushing the chest forwards to drop. The additional momentum from pushing the chest forwards can be added at a later date when students are competent in the basic version of this roll.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Prep the start and finish positions separately (Birdie Prep Position and Single Leg Hocks Hang)

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Both legs bent
- ⇒ Different finish position such as Splits Under The Bar
- ⇒ Single Leg Cradle Roll provides a similar roll starting and finishing on the knee

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Combinations such as Single Hocks Mount to Mini Millwheel
- ⇒ Advanced Progression: Full Millwheel

SINGLE LEG CRADLE ROLL



SHOULDER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

As a pre-requisite to this roll, students need a strong Single Leg Cradle and also a confident Delilah on both sides.

1. Start in a Single Leg Cradle Position.
2. Place both hands on the bottom bar in the gap next to the stomach area ensuring you have a good grip with both hands.
3. Engage the shoulders at this point.
4. Slowly drop the head and shoulders forwards to initiate the momentum needed for the roll, keeping the bent leg gripped tightly on the hoop.
5. Allow the torso to drop forwards out of the hoop rotating around the bottom bar until you end up in a Delilah position on the bottom bar.
6. Dismount from Delilah as normal.
7. Repeat on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the knee that is hocked keeps a tight grip on the bar by maintaining the bend throughout the roll, this is the lock for this move therefore the leg that catches in the Delilah.
- ✓ Make sure when the hands grip the bottom bar, the thumbs are locked around the bar. A number of grip variations are possible for this roll as the hands can be removed or adjusted at the base position.
- ✓ Allow the nose to drop slowly towards the bottom knee, controlling dropping the weight of the torso will help control the speed of the roll.
- ✓ Depending on the size of your hoop, you may need to bend the bottom leg also to stop it from contacting the top bar as you roll.
- ✓ Ensure the shoulders are engaged throughout the roll. This is especially important when you catch the final position and if you are attempting to roll with speed.
- ✓ Keep the elbows soft throughout for the same reason stated above.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

This roll can be spotted from the side bar of the hoop with the hands placed on the student's shoulders. The hand grip may need to move as the student rolls to ensure the end position is also safely spotted.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Students dropping the head and shoulders too fast therefore creating too much momentum. Encourage them to curve through the spine slowly dropping the nose to the knee to control the movement. As students become more confident in the basic version of this roll – additional momentum can be added.

Getting a good hand grip: Depending on the student's position in the Single Leg Cradle, some students can find it hard to get both hands securely on the bottom bar with the fingers locked. Encourage them to keep adjusting their Single leg cradle until this is achieved, as this is key to the roll. It can help to create a hollow body, dropping the hips back slightly from the bar to create space.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Prep the Single Leg Cradle and Delilah positions separately
- ⇒ Attempting the roll with a guidance spot from an instructor

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Both legs bent
- ⇒ Mini Millwheel provides a similar roll using the knee grip but is more upright

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Side Star roll to Candlestick
- ⇒ Double Leg Cradle rolls

REVERSE ENTRY DELILAH TO CRESCENT MOON



SHOULDER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

To teach this roll, students will need to have achieved a strong Delilah, Delilah to Crescent Moon Mount and Crescent Moon.

1. Start in a Delilah Position on the bottom bar of the hoop.
2. Take the opposite hand to knee that is hooked up to approximately the mid-point of the side bar.
3. Pull up through the arms, engaging the shoulders.
4. At the same time, swing the bottom leg up and over the bottom bar – through the hoop.
5. Using the momentum created from the leg swing and the pull through the arms, bring the body into a Crescent Moon position.
6. An alternative finish point for this mount would be to keep rotating through the hoop onto the back of the thigh of the knee that was hooked, reaching across the hoop into a Birdie Prep position.
7. Repeat on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the shoulders are engaged throughout this roll.
- ✓ A hollow body position will be needed as the bottom leg swings up and through the hoop.
- ✓ It can help to transition the arms from a pull to a pushing action as the body comes into the hoop if you find this move places excessive pressure on the pelvis.
- ✓ Make sure you are working on a hoop that is large enough to allow you to swing the straight leg through cleanly without any contact with the top bar.
- ✓ If you are performing the full roll to Birdie Prep, ensure the foot is not hooked in the Crescent Moon position as this can restrict the roll and cause damage to the ankle joint.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

To spot this roll you can spot the head and shoulder position from the side bar. It can also be worth covering Delilah to Delilah through the hoop prior to teaching this roll as if the momentum carries the student through the hoop; this provides a good emergency dismount.

COMMON PROBLEMS

The transition from the Delilah into the hoop is the most challenging part of this roll. Lots of students find they are able to swing the leg upwards but not convert this movement to pull themselves over onto their stomach in the hoop. This is a combination of pulling with the arms and following through with the leg – the leg should swing upwards but go beyond this and swing through the hoop. This will help the rotation of the torso.

Hand height. Students often climb their hands too high (as if performing a normal Delilah mount to Crescent Moon) if the hands are too high, then even with a hollow body there will not be enough room around the side bar to transition from under the hoop to inside it. Conversely, if the hands are too low then the pull on the arms will be too great to get the torso in the hoop. Encourage students to practise moving the hands up and down until they find a point, which is comfortable for them to work at.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Delilah Mount to Crescent Moon climbing up the side bar of the hoop

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Perform with both legs straight, making the starting position a Candlestick

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Rolling all the way around to Birdie Prep position
- ⇒ Performing multiple rolls around the side bar

CRADLE ROLL TO HOCKS



SHOULDER SPOT TO BABY CRADLE/UPPER BACK SUPPORT



TEACHING POINTS

The pre-requisites for this roll are Cradle position and Double Leg Hocks Hang. It can also be beneficial to have already covered Single Leg Cradle Roll (the younger sister of this move!)

1. Starting in a Cradle position, take one hand to either side of your knees, making sure you have a secure hand grip on the bottom bar.
2. The hands should not be cross gripped and the elbows should both remain in front of the bottom bar.
3. When you are ready to roll, drop the nose slowly to the knees to create the momentum from the torso.
4. Make sure the knees stay bent tightly around the bottom bar, pulling the heels back to the bottom.
5. Allow the body to rotate all the way around until you reach the Hocks position
6. At this point, adjust to the centre of the bottom bar if necessary, and then remove the hands to a full Hocks Hang.
7. Dismount from the Hocks position as normal.

8. Repeat on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure both hands get a good grip on the bottom bar with the thumbs locked. As the hands remain on throughout this roll it can cause some discomfort in the palms while students get used to the conditioning needed in the hands from rolling.
- ✓ Keep the knees tightly bent as these are the lock in the move and allow you to catch the Hocks Hang securely behind both knees. If the grip has moved during the transition make sure you re-adjust before removing the hands into a full Hocks Hang.
- ✓ Control the momentum by dropping the nose to the knees keeping the spine in a concave position. Sit back with the hips and do not allow the hips to drop forwards until necessary, as they help counterbalance the body weight in the roll.
- ✓ Due to the start position, the Hocks can end up off centre, adjust this position before removing the hand grip.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

As this is a tucked position, it's a much easier roll to spot. The spotter can spot the shoulder position, changing the grip to support the upper back as the roll transitions. This can be a guidance or reassurance spot – depending on how much support the student needs.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Getting both hands on securely: Depending on how crunched you are in your cradle position and your arm length, will affect if you are comfortably able to get both hands in a good grip either side of the knees. If students are unable to reach the secondary hand over the knees, encourage them to adjust the Cradle position, tucking the knees into the chest and lifting the torso into a more vertical position until they feel they have a safe grip in both hands.

Getting both knees hocked on safely to let go: Again a closer Cradle can help this, as can keeping a tight knee bend throughout. Some students will find they need to adjust either the knee grip or the height of the knees on the bottom bar to achieve a safe Hocks Hang. Encourage them to do this prior to removing the hand grip.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Practise the start and finish positions; the Cradle and the Hocks Hang without the rolling transition

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Vary the speed of the roll using momentum from dropping the torso faster/slower
- ⇒ Single Leg Cradle Roll

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Advanced Progression: Full Cradle roll to floor
- ⇒ Cradle roll to a different finish position such as Open Delilah

HOCKS SLIDE



SHOULDER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Pre-requisites for this move; Pike Mount in hoop, Hocks Hang on top bar

1. Pike Mount in the hoop, but when you hocks, place both legs on the same side of the rigging point.
2. The hand that is on the same side as the legs slides all the way down to the bottom bar.
3. Reach as far around as you can with this bottom hand keeping the elbow in front of the hoop.
4. As the top hand pulls, the bottom hand pushes, and you can gently release your knee grip to allow the legs to slide down the side bar of the hoop, all the time maintaining the hocks position.
5. When the legs reach the bottom bar, keep the bottom arm in front of the bottom bar and allow the hips to sink back into the Cradle position.
6. Dismount as normal and repeat on the other side to ensure balance.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the knee grip is only released enough to initiate the slide to begin with. As students become more confident the release through the knees will allow them to increase the speed of the slide.
- ✓ The knees should still stay in the hocked position throughout the slide, to allow the catch into the Cradle position.
- ✓ Both knees should release equally and travel together down the side bar, don't allow the knees to separate.
- ✓ Try not to allow students to push forwards with the hips, instead sit back into the position to help create the Cradle catch on the bottom bar.
- ✓ Make sure the arms are actively working to support the sliding motion by pulling the weight of the torso up through the top arm and bracing through the bottom arm.
- ✓ Do not let the bottom arm drop behind the bottom bar or you can risk getting the elbow trapped. This can also result in an unsafe Cradle finish position.
- ✓ The move in this format can only be performed on a single point hoop.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

Depending on the height of the hoop the spot should focus on the head and shoulders but an argument can also be made for spotting the top hand grip if the height of the hoop allows it as this is the safety in this move.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Initiating the slide: Students can find it hard to initiate the movement as they are gripping too tightly with their knees; encourage them to relax the knee grip without losing the hocks shape. This can be more challenging on a hoop with sticky tape, it may stutter to begin with but will improve and become more fluid with practise.

Getting the bottom arm trapped behind the bottom bar: It's important to brace through this arm as low as possible sliding it as far around as you can as this will help the arm fall naturally in front rather than behind and will also provide more support to the slide and stop an unsafe finish position.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Try getting into the prep position from Pike mount and dismount also recap the finishing position independently

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Try one leg slide to Single Leg Cradle

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Add on a combination at the start or end of this move for example Hocks Splits to Hocks Slide to Cradle Roll to Hocks

SINGLE LEG HOCKS SLIDE



SHOULDER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

Prerequisites for this move include Single Hocks Shoulder Stand, Pencil Shoulder Stand and Single Leg Cradle.

1. Mount the top bar into a Single Hocks Shoulder Stand.
2. Change the legs into a Pencil Shoulder Stand position.
3. This will allow you to take the front leg to the opposite side of the rigging point and re-hocks.
4. Keep the other leg straight behind the hoop but bring it forwards so that it has contact with the side bar.
5. The hand that is on the same side as the legs slides all the way down to the bottom bar.
6. Reach as far around as you can with this bottom hand keeping the elbow in front of the hoop.
7. As the top hand pulls, the bottom hand pushes, and you can gently release your knee grip and take the toes of the straight leg towards the floor to slide the knee all the way down the side bar of the hoop, all the time maintaining the hocks.

8. When the knee reaches the bottom bar, keep the bottom arm in front of the bottom bar and allow the hips to sink back into the Single Leg Cradle position.
9. Dismount as normal.
10. Repeat on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ The move in this format can only be performed on a Single Point Hoop.
- ✓ Ensure the knee grip is only released enough to initiate the slide to begin with. As students become more confident the release through the knee will allow them to increase the speed of the slide.
- ✓ The knee should still stay in the hocked position throughout the slide, to allow the catch into the Single Leg Cradle.
- ✓ Do not take the straight leg down towards the floor until you are ready to initiate the slide.
- ✓ Make sure the arms are actively working to support the sliding motion by pulling the weight of the torso up through the top arm and bracing through the bottom arm.
- ✓ Do not let the bottom arm drop behind the bottom bar or you can risk getting the elbow trapped. This can also result in an unsafe Single Leg Cradle position.

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

Depending on the height of the hoop the spot should focus on the head and shoulders but an argument can also be made for spotting the top hand grip if the height of the hoop allows it as this is the safety in this move.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Initiating the slide: Students can find it hard to initiate the movement as they are gripping too tightly with their knee; encourage them to relax the knee grip without losing the hocks shape. This can be more challenging on a hoop with sticky tape, it may stutter to begin with but will improve and become more fluid with practise. It can also be beneficial to take the straight leg down towards the floor as this will help pull the weight of the hips downwards and into the slide.

Getting the bottom arm trapped behind the bottom bar: It's important to brace through this arm as low as possible on the bottom bar sliding it as far around as you can as this will help the arm fall naturally in front rather than behind and will also provide more support to the slide and stop an unsafe finish position.

REGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Try getting into the prep position from the Single Hocks/Pencil Shoulder Stand and then dismount as normal
- ⇒ Recap the Single Leg Cradle finish position

ALTERNATIVES

- ⇒ Try the double leg Hocks Slide to Cradle
- ⇒ Try changing the finish position of the slide to a Side Star

PROGRESSIONS

- ⇒ Add on a combination at the start or end of this move for example Splits Under The Bar to Single Leg Hocks Slide to Cradle Roll Out

PIKE POP OFF



SPOT RELEASE AND LEGS TO PREVENT SKIN THE CAT



TEACHING POINTS

A Pop Off is the opposite of a Pop On, where the students use the popping action to drop into a Pike or Straddle underneath the bottom bar to dismount. This dismount tends to be cleaner but does carry with it a higher risk of injury therefore we do not introduce it until late in the intermediate level.

1. From a seated position in the hoop, place the hands at shoulder width apart on the top bar
2. Sitting the hips backward, students should drop the weight backwards out of the hoop until the hoop rests in the back of the knees.
3. With the eye line towards the knees, release the hand grip, allowing the hands to drop down to the bottom bar in an overhand grip.
4. The Hocks can then be released and the legs extended to the final Pike position
5. Once confident students can increase the tempo of the stages of the Pop Off listed above.

Initially, students should drop to the Hocks position then extend to the Pike position until they feel confident to progress to fuller versions of this move. Once confident with the Pop Off action, the starting position can begin from seated with the hands either side of the hips. Students may wish to continue to drop to Hocks first, but eventually can drop straight to the Pike position.

FULL PIKE POP OFF



SAFETY POINTS

- ✓ Break each section of the transition down into controlled stages before having students try at a high tempo
- ✓ Ensure students have a strong pop-on before attempting to pop-off
- ✓ Students should have good strength in their shoulders at this time and a good understanding of shoulder engagement
- ✓ Encourage students to sit back with the hips to initiate the movement and control the pace.
- ✓ Hamstring engagement is essential during the transition of the hands from the top to bottom bar.
- ✓ Students should keep the eyes forwards and can tuck the chin slightly to protect the neck during the initial stage of the Pop Off and help prevent skinning the cat in the final position
- ✓ Maintain a hollow body throughout to support the Hocks position and protect the neck
- ✓ Ensure students release the hand grip directly down towards the bottom bar, keeping the hands in view during this transition

SPOTTING GUIDANCE

Spotting a pop off can be difficult as it's a highly dynamic movement. Spotters should place themselves to the side of the student and be prepared to support the upper back for the hand transition and slide back to hocks, followed by the legs to help to prevent students skinning the cat.

It can be beneficial to have two spotters, one each side to spot the hand grip but also to stop the student from over rotating and skinning the cat if necessary.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Fear of not being able to catch the bar or the hocks. Students may find this transition intimidating at first due to the change in height and the backwards nature of the movement. Teaching the transition in stages with a secure spot can be beneficial in building and understanding of the movement. It can also help to have students test the hand movements from seated, one at a time - releasing one hand, placing it on the bottom bar and then replacing it on the top bar, then again on the opposite side.

Too much downwards force. If the chin does not remain tucked or the eyeline is directed backwards, students can generate unwanted backwards momentum. Have students practise the initial stage of the

transition to Hocks and pause there before extending to the Pike position. Cueing them to look towards the knees can be helpful.

Skinning the Cat. If the above stages are followed carefully students should not skin the cat, however improper neck alignment or excess backwards momentum can result in over-rotation from the final Pike position. Encourage students to keep the chin tucked and maintain a slight hollow body in the Hocks stage. The Hocks to Pike action can be drilled separately or repeatedly as a Hocks off/Hocks on condition exercise prior to introducing the full skill.

REGRESSIONS	ALTERNATIVES	PROGRESSIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Pop On ⇒ Pop Off to Hocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Variation of starting positions ⇒ Single Leg Pop Off (finishing in Splits Under the Bar or variations thereof) ⇒ Pop Off to Hocks then Pike or Straddle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Pop Off to Pop On ⇒ Beat in front to Pop Off Pike ⇒ Full Pop Off to Pike (advanced)

AROUND THE WORLD



HIP SPOT



PARTNER SPOT



TEACHING POINTS

The pre-requisite move for an Around the World would be a Single Point Flag. Moves such as Single Arm Hang and Amazon can also be beneficial to develop the necessary strength required.

1. Starting in a Single Point Flag position, out of the front of the hoop.
2. Ensure the top hand is as close to the rigging point as possible, with the secondary hand horizontal onto the side bar.
3. Transferring the weight into the top hand, push the hoop behind you with the horizontal hand.
4. At this point, you will be hanging on one arm.
5. As you start to turn towards the side bar of the hoop, bring your free arm up to grip the side bar.
6. This should allow you to help lift one leg (usually the outside leg back into the hoop into a Delilah)
7. Dismount as normal.
8. Repeat on the other side.

SAFETY POINTS

GENERAL POINTS

- ✓ Ensure the shoulders are engaged throughout, this is a shoulder heavy move.
- ✓ Ensure the body retains a strong posture throughout using the core to support.
- ✓ Ensure students are aware of their best emergency dismount. Rigging the hoop low and encouraging them to step onto the floor if they are unable to complete the rotation is their best option.
- ✓ At this point, students should be confident with their hand grip
- ✓ Having the top hand closer to the rigging point, will be easier to grip rather than gripping on the curvature of the hoop, which can cause the hand to slide.
- ✓ The secondary hand can be used to 'assist' the movement as much as necessary by increasing the push so that the hoop travels to meet you faster. Alternatively, a spotter can bring the bar around for you.
- ✓ Ensure students don't over grip or under grip, which may cause the hoop to under rotate.
- ✓ The easiest way to re-mount the hoop is using the outside leg to hook into a Delilah. Other options are available as students get stronger including the inside leg to Open Delilah, or the inside leg (or both legs together) to return to sitting.

SPOTTING TECHNIQUE

As with all dynamic technique – the Around the World sequence can be challenging from the perspective of a spotter as it rotates 180 degrees around the hoop. Students should learn this move on a low height hoop where possible, to allow a standing dismount if required. To spot the move at height, spotters should support the hips where possible guiding them around the side bar.

PARTNER SPOTTING

One partner can stabilise the hoop while the other spots the movement if required.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Students often do not have sufficient grip to complete the move. If sufficient momentum is not created, the circle can take longer therefore greater hand strength is required. The hand grip will also be challenged if the top hand is placed too far down the curvature of the top bar. This will also put additional pressure on the wrist. Grip can also be affected if the shoulder is relaxed and not engaged.

REGRESSIONS

⇒ Single Point Flag

ALTERNATIVES

⇒ Hooking the leg to an Open Delilah or Double Hocks to finish.

PROGRESSIONS

⇒ Pike/Tuck Around the World
⇒ Straddle Around the World
⇒ Tuck Around from standing

UNIT 4

STRENGTH, FLEXIBILITY AND ENDURANCE

When teaching at an intermediate level, there is a greater requirement for students to be developing their own strength and flexibility. This not only allows them to achieve more technical moves, it can also help to increase their safety in a number of intermediate positions. For the benefit of the next unit, it will help us to define what we mean by the terms 'strength' and 'flexibility' along with other terms discussed such as 'endurance' and 'power'.

- ✓ **Strength** - the extent to which muscles can exert force by contracting against resistance
- ✓ **Power** - the ability to exert maximum muscular contraction instantly in an explosive burst of movements
- ✓ **Agility** - the ability to perform a series of explosive power movements in rapid succession in opposing directions
- ✓ **Balance** - the ability to control the body's position, either stationary or while moving
- ✓ **Flexibility** - the ability to achieve an extended range of motion
- ✓ **Local Muscle Endurance** - a single muscle's ability to perform sustained work
- ✓ **Cardiovascular Endurance** - the heart's ability to deliver blood to working muscles and their ability to use it
- ✓ **Strength Endurance** - a muscle's ability to perform a maximum contraction time after time
- ✓ **Co-ordination** - the ability to integrate the above listed components so that effective movements are achieved.

To help students achieve this as an instructor, you need to understand fundamental principles of training including individuality, overloading, periodisation, specificity, reversibility, variety and rest.

- ✓ **Individuality** – it's important as an instructor that we see all of our students as individuals. Each student will come to us with a unique skill set – which may be genetic or developed from previous training. Each will react to classes differently and learning their strengths and weaknesses will allow us as instructors to know when to offer adaptations, progressions, regressions and modifications.
- ✓ **Overloading** – overloading is a great way to avoid hitting plateaus, a subject we will discuss in more detail later. It is a deliberate, progressive increase in either the intensity or volume of training. By pushing students with new and regular training regimes, students' bodies will begin to adapt and their ability will increase. Conditioning work is a great way to overload students in a steady and progressive manner. Work on the principle of changing the **Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type** (The **FITT** Principle).
- ✓ **Periodisation** – Periodisation can be described as the structure of the training you offer your students, or in our language, your syllabus, long term and short term lesson plans. From an instructional point of view, your periodisation is likely to consider all three phases the macro cycle (a year) the meso cycle (a 4-6 week period) and the micro cycle (each week). The micro and meso cycles will allow you to set manageable short term goals, and to change the focus of the classes your students will complete.
- ✓ **Reversibility** – often called de-training, reversibility is where if students stop attending regular classes, they are likely to drop in ability, the concept of use it or lose it. The magnitude of loss depends on detraining period – e.g. performance decrements are evident after two weeks in well-trained individuals, and over six weeks in recreationally trained men (Kraemer et al, 2002).

- ✓ **Variety** – The principle of variety is to encourage students to undertake variety in their training to ensure they remain motivated and inspired but also to ensure that through the mix of training, their bodies continue to adapt and the risk of overtraining is reduced. After a period of training the body adapts to the demands made on it. If the training continues without variation then the body will cease to adapt and it will in fact become stale (Hennessy, 2010).
- ✓ **Rest** – optimal training, along with optimal rest will result in your students being able to achieve optimal results. Rest, as a principle of training – should not be overlooked.
- ✓ **Specificity** - Sport specific training is acknowledged as an essential component of a training programme in order to generate the desired training response (Kraemer et al., 2002). Although we should encourage students to develop variety in their training, that variety could be in aerial equipment, or a range of conditioning exercises to ensure their training is still sport specific. Below, we have included a range of conditioning exercises that are specific to Intermediate Aerial Hoop.

INTERMEDIATE STRENGTH EXERCISES

Straddle lifts and tips



From a standard Straddle Mount, get students to start thinking about lifting their legs off the floor. Bent legs will make this exercise easier, straight legs will make this exercise harder. If students are struggling, a good regression would be to get them to practise lowering a straddle mount instead of lifting. Straddle tips are where students hold the straddle at the top position and tip their hips down towards the ground and pull them back up. Ensure students only tip so far that they can pull back up to the top and that the shoulders are engaged during all straddle drills.

Beats to sit / chin up to sit



From a hanging position in front of the hoop, see if students are able to use their upper body strength to lift themselves back to sitting. This is very challenging so a good regression would be to use a beating movement to add some momentum to the movement, making it easier to return to a seated position. Ensure students are aware of their dismount options if they are unable to make it back to seat.

Pike pull up



From a standard Pike Mount, students should stay in the pike position and see if they can pull their hips up to the bottom bar using only their arms. A common problem will be students lifting their legs in this exercise; try to ensure they are pulling up rather than unfolding at the hip, even if it's only a small movement to begin with, it will still be beneficial.

Tick tocks



From a standard Straddle Mount move into a high straddle where the feet are now touching the side bars of the hoop directly above the hips. See if students can move one leg over to meet the other, return to the straddle in the middle and then repeat this exercise on the other side. Ensure both sides are worked evenly and that this exercise is introduced at a later stage in intermediate.

Skin the Cat



From a standard Pike mount position, the students should retain the pike position and continue to drop the hips between the hands as far as they feel they can comfortably go, then pull back up to pike. Ensure a spotter is on hand to help students return via the pike position by supporting a percentage of the leg weight rather than performing a skin the cat dismount which can be problematic on the shoulders.

FLEXIBILITY

As students begin to get stronger and more powerful at an intermediate level, flexibility is often ignored and we often see deteriorations in a student's flexibility at this level. Each student will to some extent have a limit to their flexibility, be that the mechanical factors such as bone structure, muscle structure, genetic factors or hypermobility, laxity or increased tension following injury, gender or age – we can all improve our flexibility to some extent. By educating your students how to safely increase their own level of flexibility you will prevent injury, aid circulation, increase performance in strength and power, amongst a range of other benefits.

At an intermediate level, students should understand to a greater extent what flexibility is and the anatomical and physiological changes that will take place. The most important concept to understand is that of muscle reflexes. Skeletal muscles have two sensory units that detect and respond to change in muscle length – muscle spindles and golgi tendon organs. Muscle spindles are the nerve receptors inside skeletal muscles; they sit parallel with muscle fibres and register change in muscle length. Golgi tendon organs exist in the tendon and are highly sensitive to tension in the muscle tendon complex. They are inhibitory in nature to help the body reduce injury. When we stretch muscles too quickly this reflex arc kicks in to stop us over stretching and causing injury. Understanding this relationship should allow students to understand how to stretch safely. Gradual and progressive stretching will inhibit and overcome this reflex as the nerves will become more tolerant and not fight the action.

In terms of basic rules for stretching, students should always have performed a thorough warm up prior to stretching, stretches should be performed before and after exercise (as discussed in great detail in the beginners course – pre-exercise stretching serves a greatly different purpose to post-exercise stretching). It is important that stretching is always balanced with opposing muscle groups stretched in pairs and that stretches are only pushed to your own point of tension and not beyond. Stretches should be moved in and out of gently and slowly using the breath to help relax the body into the stretch.

At an intermediate level there are a range of stretching options available to students;

- ✓ **Static Stretching** – static stretching is a great option for beginners, due to the safe nature of this type of stretching. Static refers to stretches that are held, without movement. This could be a maintenance stretch (to maintain flexibility – held for a shorter period of time) or a developmental stretch (to develop flexibility, held for a longer period of time).
- ✓ **Dynamic Stretching** – dynamic stretches are often used at the end of warm ups as they are a controlled movement within the limits of a student's range of movement.
- ✓ **Ballistic Stretching** – ballistic stretching are rapid swings and bouncing movements. This is a very aggressive type of stretching and not recommended to students due to its aggressive nature.
- ✓ **Assisted Stretching** – assisted stretching can be a great option to increase flexibility, each stretch is assisted by another person or apparatus such as a yoga strap. It is highly effective but does carry a higher element of risk than static stretching.
- ✓ **PNF Stretching** – proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation stretching, also known as the contract/relax method works on the principle of stretching and contracting the muscles in phases. Also highly effective, it is one of the most effective ways of seeing an increase in range of movement.

Flexibility should be worked on every session. Listed below are a few key drills and areas of flexibility to work on with your students covering the areas they will need to progress:

INTERMEDIATE FLEXIBILITY

Splits stretching



For splits stretching, students should be working on their hamstring flexibility, glute and hip flexor flexibility for front splits (on both sides) and their hip and adductor flexibility for box splits. Students will often only work through one 'split' it's important to encourage them to work all three equally. Use yoga blocks if necessary to help align the hips/pelvis and support good posture in static stretches. PNF hamstring stretching can also be very beneficial.

Back stretching



To increase back flexibility, students should think about stretching the back through all planes of movement, extension, flexion, lateral and rotational flexibility to ensure balance. Ensure students always work in balance, so when back extension is trained it is important to put the back into flexion also. This is even more important when the level of back balances is increased as the lower back region tends to get very tight on a number of students as this musculature develops.

Shoulder flexibility



Shoulders should not be neglected. Ensure the shoulders and lats are stretched after every class to retain flexibility in this joint as muscular strength increases. Although the most flexible joint in the body, students often lose this flexibility when they begin aerial work as the supporting musculature starts to develop. Using the hoop can be a great way to stretch the shoulder joint through its full range of movement.

COMBINATIONS

Combinations are a fantastic instructional tool at an intermediate level. Firstly, they allow you to progress your students in a number of ways. They increase the stamina of your students, both in strength endurance and cardiovascular fitness, they educate your students as to how different moves link together and transition into each other in different ways and they help your students consolidate their learning by giving each move a context in which it fits. Secondly, they help you to halt the progression of your students stopping them from moving onto an advanced level until they are physically and mentally prepared to do so. Intermediate combinations are so expansive, they can provide a huge amount of material to teach which your students will find beneficial and stimulating. Don't be tempted to stunt your students' learning by only teaching new moves, sequencing through combinations is just as, if not more, important.

Combinations can also be a way of making beginner's moves, suitable for an intermediate level. Linking two beginner moves with a more complex transition can make a sequence more suited to an intermediate group. On this note, it can also be useful to incorporate beginner moves with intermediate moves into combinations if you are teaching a particularly tricky intermediate move that might require a great deal of strength to get in or out of, buttressing this with beginner's moves either end can help make combinations that are realistic and achievable. It can also be good to challenge students with trying to find interesting transitions between movements at this stage or challenging students by giving them two moves and encouraging them to find a way between them.

TABLE OF INTERMEDIATE COMBINATIONS

Half Back Balance to Stag Back Balance to Wineglass	Scarab Forwards to Scarab Backwards to Shoulder Stand Sequence
Man in the Moon to Side Amazon to Single Leg Cradle	Splits in the Hoop to Crab in the Hoop to Hocks Splits
Front Balance to Gazelle to French Gazelle Roll Out	Splits Away to Reverse Figurehead to Reverse Splits Away
Single Hocks Mount to Birdie to Mini Millwheel	Side Amazon to Double Leg Cradle to Wineglass
Half Back Balance to Star on the Bar to Crucifix	Man in the Moon to Delilah on Top to Iron Fanny
Star on the Bar to Front Amazon to Cobra/Mermaid	Splits under the bar to Hip Hold sequence to Candlestick
Sitting to Front Balance roll out to Delilah	Crescent Moon to Iron Fanny roll to Walking Man
Front Amazon to Side Amazon to Iron Fanny	Cradle to Wineglass to Arabesque

HINTS AND TIPS

Students may try to progress quickly, before nailing the basics reliably. Keep their interest by combining moves into different combinations, and allowing them the creativity to find new ways between the moves, or reversing the combos, this will allow them to build confidence and the strength needed to safely progress.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Choreography is another way you can stand out as an intermediate instructor. Think about how you can progress your student's choreography from the beginner's level. Routines should be at a faster pace, they should contain more complex sequences of moves or combinations and you may want students to perform longer routines, incorporating a freestyle element to help consolidate their learning. It is important that not only do your teaching skills develop, but so does the choreography you build.

STAMINA/ENDURANCE

Both combinations and choreography can build students' stamina and endurance on the hoop. Stamina and endurance are two key factors that will help students progress onto advanced level skills.

There are three factors that can limit a student's endurance levels;

1. The student's fitness, limits of their cardio-respiratory system and muscular endurance
2. Hoop specific factors such as skin conditioning and grip development
3. Mental factors such as a student's knowledge of hoop moves and transitions to allow them to develop and work on extended combinations

All of these factors should be developed at an intermediate level using the techniques suggested below;

1. Variety in training

As the body gets used to a training regime, it adapts to that regime and stops developing. Adding variety to your training can help you keep developing your stamina and endurance and stop you hitting plateaus. This could be something as simple as training moves on both a single point and double point hoop or adding another class to your training regime such as pole or fabric.

2. Dynamic Movements

Adding dynamic movements to your hoop work will make it more challenging than simply performing static move variations. A great example of this would be Iron Fanny, although it takes lots of core control to stabilise an Iron Fanny, adding a rolling dismount to this movement will incorporate a greater number of muscles if performed with correct technique and control.

3. Combinations of movements using different muscle groups

Try and think about moves that are compound exercises (using lots of muscles working in conjunction with each other) rather than moves that use muscles in isolation. Then try and put these moves into combinations that work a whole range of different muscle groups. Splits Away to Reverse Figurehead is a great example as Splits Away emphasises the engagement of the shoulders, trapezius, rhomboids and lats whereas Reverse Figurehead incorporates the glutes and hamstrings also.

4. Working at different intensities

When working at different intensities different muscle fibres fire and develop, think about trying to use both slow motion and fast paced movement in your combinations, sequences and choreography.

5. Reduced rest periods

Reducing your rest periods between individual movements or sequences will help to increase stamina and endurance on the hoop. Think about trying individual moves on your dominant and then non-dominant side directly after each other – with no rest in-between.

6. Educating students

Most importantly educating your students will allow them to develop their own stamina and endurance. By providing them with good knowledge of individual moves, transitions, variations and adaptations will give them the ability they need to develop longer sequences. Encourage independent learning in your classes with students putting together anything from a group routine to a freestyle to a chosen song.

HITTING PLATEAUS

The most frustrating part of teaching at an intermediate level is when students begin to hit plateaus. At a beginners level, if students are able to mount the hoop – the learning progresses steadily with new moves readily available and achievable. At an intermediate level, moves start to become increasingly challenging requiring additional strength, stamina and endurance – without these, students start to hit walls, struggling to get past individual nemesis moves and often lose the desire to train. In this section, we will discuss the reasons students hit plateaus and how you as an instructor can help them move past these barriers.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS

1. Fear factors, often students will create barriers when they hit certain height boundaries on the hoop. This could be transitioning from a sitting height to standard height hoop or moving up onto the top bar.
2. Lack of consistent training, students that come to one class a week will often have the same move goals as students that come to three classes a week, yet their restricted training will have a subsequent effect on their strength, endurance and all the different factors needed to achieve these moves.
3. Progressing too quickly, students that have been progressed through the beginner's moves too quickly will also have the same issues as those with a restricted training schedule. The necessary strength, endurance and conditioning will not have been developed through these moves in preparation for the intermediate syllabus.
4. Overtraining. This can be caused by extreme levels of training, training too long without proper recovery, ineffective application of the overload principle. This can cause a decrease in performance, increased risk of injury and decreased motivation for training.

5. Plateaus can often be caused by muscular imbalances within students – usually demonstrated through one highly dominant side or a failure to adequately rehabilitate previous injuries.

SOLUTIONS

1. Goal setting, ensure students have a range of different goals at all times, so that if they hit a nemesis move, you can help them refocus their attention and encourage them to work on one of their other goals. Goals can be set using the '**SMART**' framework where each goal is **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic** and have a specific **Timeframe**.
2. Create a safe environment within your classes where students feel challenged but are not afraid to try new things and make mistakes.
3. Encourage your students to overcome plateaus by training with as many instructors as possible, by attending workshops and masterclasses. Each instructor will have a range of different hints or tips that may help overcome that nemesis move!
4. Achieving a balance between regular training and rest is key. Practise sessions are a great way of giving students the opportunity to work on skills that they struggled on in class. Help students go into practise sessions with a plan to work through to maintain focus. It is also important to ensure students are having rest days and have a diet that is sufficient to keep energy levels up during training sessions.
5. Cross training can help students develop the additional strength and endurance needed to avoid hitting plateaus. This may be training another discipline or simply ensuring your training is balanced in both strength and flexibility and that you regularly train your non-dominant side.
6. Teaching progressively, if you structure your syllabus correctly and ensure that your classes are well paced, aimed at building student's strength, stamina and endurance along with their knowledge of moves, variations and transitions, that your classes are varied and contain skills that will suit different students – then you will greatly reduce the chance of students hitting plateaus in the first place and prevention is always better than cure!

UNIT 5

PROGRESSIVE TEACHING AND COACHING

When teaching at an intermediate level, it is important to adapt your teaching style to suit the group.

ADVANCED TEACHING METHODS

STUDENT LED LEARNING

Advanced teaching methods can help to encourage your students to take responsibility for their own learning. It's important to move beyond the stage where students are simply copying demonstrations and instructions and instead are being to understand movement and body positioning. Techniques that can help include:

- ✓ Encouraging interactivity within your class with tasks such as group work, for example, getting students to build their own choreography/routines in small groups, to brainstorm combinations that work from the move that you have just taught them etc.
- ✓ Rather than simply demonstrating moves, start questioning students 'what comes next', 'where should I feel pressure in this move'?
- ✓ Reflective learning, when students are performing combinations, why not try videoing students and encouraging them to self-analyse their own technique.

VERBAL SKILLS

One of the other key considerations as an intermediate instructor is how you can progress your verbal skills. Now that students are working at height, verbal communication is your key way of conveying information to your student whilst they are performing a move. Make sure you ensure your teaching and safety points are clear and concise, think of ways you could help a student to understand by using skills such as analogies ('it should look like a lobster pincer grip') be consistent with the words you choose to describe different grips or positions and above all be as brief as possible! You want to move your student safely through the stages of the move before they get too tired to complete them.

INTRINSIC GOALS

One of the key skills of the advanced instructor is to create success in every member of their class, even when students are progressing at different speeds. This is where intrinsic goal setting comes into play. Intrinsic goals are where students are motivated to take part for the enjoyment of the task itself rather than for expected results. If instructors are able to create an ethos of intrinsic motivation in classes, then students are less likely to compare themselves to other students' achievements and have self-belief that they can reach their goals over time. The emphasis from the instructor is therefore on effort in the class rather than praising success.

INSTRUCTOR KNOWLEDGE

An instructor does not become an advanced instructor – simply on their ability to perform advanced moves. Technique is important – an advanced instructor should always strive to be a role model, and demonstrate good physical awareness. Pupils will look at you as the benchmark of how they should be performing their own move but teaching at a higher level encompasses so much more. An advanced teacher has a whole host of skills in

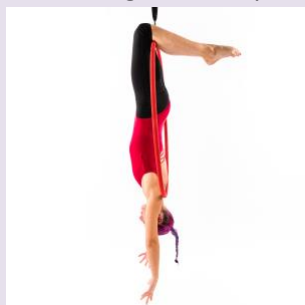
their instructional toolbox that allows them to get the best out of every student that they teach. An advanced teacher has an intrinsic knowledge of each move, they have a range of entry and exit points, suitable for different shapes and sizes, they know all of the variations to each move, along with modifications for those struggling and progressions for the more capable. They will not only know the material they are teaching but they will understand it and be able to apply that in-depth knowledge in a range of different class situations.

PROGRESS CHAINS

When writing lesson plans for an intermediate group it can be useful to think of each new move in the format of a 'Progress Chain'. A Progress Chain is where each move is considered in the context of the moves that come before it and the moves that will be beneficial in some way to teaching the new move. An example of a Progress Chain is below:

NEW MOVE

Hocks Hang on the top bar



PROGRESS CHAIN

Pike Invert in hoop/Pike Dismount in hoop

Hocks Hang on bottom bar

Pike Invert/Pike Dismount on bottom bar



ADDITIONAL MOVES TO WORK ON

Single Hocks Hang on bottom bar (to ensure both legs are actively working in the Double hocks position)

Hocks sit ups on bottom bar (to gain the strength to help get in and out of the Hocks Hang on the top bar)

Progress chains allow you plan lessons that are progressive, with students working from the base of a new move right the way up. Firstly, all students will work differently through your intermediate syllabus and it's vital not to progress students before they feel ready. Therefore offering options that range from the starting point for a new move, will allow you as an instructor to know when to halt student's progress if they have not accomplished a previous move, allow them to stop at the move they feel comfortable with, yet also allow your more advanced students to progress. Secondly, it can be good to follow this system as it allows you to constantly recap beginner moves in your classes easing into new positions. Beginner moves can often be key to understanding a new position or getting in or out of it and recapping frequently is beneficial to all.

UNIT 6

INTERMEDIATE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and safety (including hoop specific health and safety) was covered in depth during the beginner course. What we now need to look at, is how we can adapt this information for an intermediate group. There are a number of factors that we need to adapt for intermediate level, these include:

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Make sure your risk assessments accurately cover your current classes. You may have your hoops slightly higher for an intermediate group, have you ensured your crash mats are suitable? Your class content has also changed, has this been taken into account? Make sure your risk assessments are always kept up to date and are relevant to your current practice.

FIRST AID CONSIDERATIONS

During the beginner course we looked at the common types of first aid incidents that could happen during a beginner aerial hoop class. Think about how this is likely to change in an intermediate class. Students are likely to be working higher up the hoop, independently; prepare for any first aid incidents that could occur from this change in your class.

CLOTHING

At an intermediate level, alternative grip points come into play such as the feet and the ankles. At this point, it's important to ensure students are dressed correctly to increase their safety which in this instance would mean removing socks or leg warmers.

ENVIRONMENT

Make sure you are teaching in a controlled environment. Choose the equipment that is most suitable for your class (do you want to rig hoops at sitting height to ensure options for both the student and yourself as a spotter for different moves?) do you have appropriate crash mats for the height you are working at? Think about ratio of students to teacher – this ratio is going to be lower in intermediate classes where a higher level of instructor spotting is required. Think about noise levels when you teach (both in the room and from background music) other distractions such as those watching classes, other equipment in the room. Make the rules of your class

clear – when students are allowed on equipment, do they need to be spotted by you the first time they try a skill? Make these rules clear from your first class.

EDUCATION

Students in your class need to be educated to become knowledgeable observers. They need to be aware of how to perform light spots on each other in a variety of positions and the purpose or benefit of spotting. They need to be great verbal communicators to help encourage correct technique, yet also be able to know their limitations and be able to halt each other and call an instructor over when necessary. This role comes from practise and education from the instructor as to appropriate behaviour in class.

CLASS CONTROL

At an Intermediate level, students should have developed good practice as to class control. Keep reinforcing your rules as to when students can use equipment, place more emphasis at this stage on lifting and lowering mounts and dismounts as students should now have the strength to be able to demonstrate a stronger awareness of their own posture and to use this gained strength to perform even the most basic moves with a greater level of discipline and control.

SPOTTING

WHAT IS SPOTTING

A spotter is a supporter for the dancer. This support initially can help guide the student into position, secondly it can help support the position or reassure the student and finally, should the student slip or fall at any stage, a spotter's aim is to try to help them land safely, minimising the risk of injury. Whenever a student in performing a move on the pole or aerial hoop, a competent spotter should always be present and alert. This is relevant to all moves performed at height.

TYPES OF SPOTTING

There are three main types of spotting:

Guidance Spotting



Reassurance Spotting




Rescue Spotting


1. Guidance spotting is where you help to move or guide a student into the correct position. This could mean helping them correct position, grip or posture. If students are not particularly proprioceptive, they will find it difficult to achieve this on their own – especially when inverted! Touch can help indicate which arm to move, which leg to move – which side of the hoop/pole to travel to and it will also help students feel 'grounded' at all times.
2. Reassurance Spotting is where you use different techniques to reassure the student helping to give them the confidence to achieve the move. This may be physical contact, it could be verbal communication or it could be stabilising the hoop underneath them or stopping a pole from spinning so that they can focus on their own body positioning.

3. A Rescue Spot is where you as a spotter are attempting to help a student land safely from an unplanned fall. If this does occur, firstly, don't forget that by educating students on a range of safe exit strategies students may be able to perform a safe emergency dismount on their own or by you talking them out of the move. Finally, your aim is to help them land safely, think about reaching high towards the shoulders and make contact as early as possible to help slow down the momentum of the fall and protect the head, neck and shoulders. The more you educate your students as to taking responsibility for their own safety, including only progressing onto new moves when they feel comfortable, the less this situation will occur.

SPOTTING TECHNIQUES

Technique	Explanation	Example of use
<p data-bbox="145 752 252 781">Hip Spot</p> 	<p data-bbox="533 752 1002 819">Where both hands hand a firm grip on the sides of the student's hips.</p>	<p data-bbox="1038 752 1347 781">Shoulder Stand variations</p>
<p data-bbox="145 1290 440 1319">Bottom Bar Stabilisation</p> 	<p data-bbox="533 1290 1002 1402">Where you are stabilising the hoop for the student when they are working at height.</p>	<p data-bbox="1038 1290 1337 1319">Owl, Reverse Figurehead</p>

<p>Shoulder Spot</p> 	<p>Where both hands are cupping under the shoulders</p>	<p>Stag Back Balance, Half Back Balance</p>
<p>Double/Partner Spot</p> 	<p>Where two spotters are present – often to support a challenging move or a dynamic movement</p>	<p>Mini Mill Wheel, French Gazelle Roll Out</p>
<p>Grip Spot</p> 	<p>When the spotter is providing additional pressure at the grip point, usually the hand or thighs</p>	<p>Single Hocks Hang or Double Hocks Hang (light ankle spot)</p>

<p>Hug Spot</p> 	<p>Where the spotter has wrapped one or both arms around the student's torso to pull them into the spotter's core</p>	<p>Walking Man, Ankle Hang</p>
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BASIC SPOTTING RULES

1. The head and shoulders should be the main priority of the spotter. This is a general rule and as always, there will be exceptions to this rule in different moves where a hand spot or other technique may be more applicable but as a general rule keep the head and shoulders off the ground – even if this means holding a different body part.
2. Ensure as a spotter you have a good base of support. Decide if you want to spot on or off a crash mat, find a standing or kneeling posture that you feel strong in and that you feel balanced in.
3. Ensure as a spotter you work with a good grip. Good grip can be difficult as we don't want to be intrusive to students, so think about their dignity and ways you can be mindful of this (such as using closed hands to spot, using forearms, holding non-sensitive body parts such as hips or shoulders) but also ensure you have a secure grip that is effective, having hands hovering will not guide, reassure or rescue your student!
4. Ensure as a spotter you have good body positioning – what is the worst scenario likely to happen in each move? Where is the student likely to tip/fall out of the move? Let this guide you as to where to place your own body in relation to the student and the equipment. As a general rule place yourself on the same side of the hoop/pole as the student where the student's body would twist into your own rather than away from you.
5. Think about height. A spot is only effective if you get the height right. As a good basic rule, try to ensure the student's hips are no higher than your shoulders, this means you may need to change your base position depending on their relative position to you e.g. from standing to a kneeling lunge during a rolling dynamic move that finishes under the hoop, such as Mini Mill Wheel. You want to draw the student into your core – rather than supporting them over your head or bending down to reach them.
6. Protect yourself. As a spotter if your technique is poor, you can often put yourself at risk of damage. Try to ensure your own posture is strong, move around the students to correct all of the above factors such as having a strong base, good body positioning and good grip. Spotters often look like they are dancing around the mat – don't be afraid of this – keep lines of communication open with a student and protect yourself as their instructor.

7. Always work with appropriate crash mats for the equipment, height and the individual moves. As a spotter, this is your back up.
8. Always try and work back from the point of 'what is the worst thing that could happen in this move. Considering the worst outcome but also common problems that occur will help you make the right choices as a spotter.

LIGHT VERSUS HEAVY SPOTTING

It is vital that whenever you are spotting you are clear with the student on whether you are providing a light spot or a heavy spot. A light spot would be where you are taking a small percentage of the student's body weight and you are just supporting the position (maybe by providing reassurance) a heavy spot would be where you are taking a larger percentage of the student's body weight or holding them in position. When a heavy spot is provided students may not always be aware that this is the case. By communicating this information to the student, they will know not to try this move without a spotter capable of providing this level of support.

FATIGUE

Be aware of fatigue at all times. This is one of your greatest spotting assets. This could come in the form of mental fatigue or physical fatigue. Look for key indicators such as a lack of engagement with the class and other class members, slipping hand grips or bad posture/muscular engagement. Question students to assess their state of mind and body and try to create an atmosphere where students feel comfortable to talk to you about this.

COMMUNICATION

When spotting at a more advanced level you will be spotting at height therefore the role of the spotter changes somewhat and the emphasis is upon observation and communication. The spotter is observing all movement so that they can communicate to the student if they have made an error in transitioning into a move, and can stop these errors before they happen. This brings a number of new factors into the equation:

- ✓ It is vital your students can hear you at all times; think about your music levels in class and other noises that could distract such as students talking to each other while you are teaching.
- ✓ Your instructions need to be clear and concise at all times.
- ✓ Think about how you can reassure students, where as previously, you may have used body contact, you may now use a technique such as tone of voice as a reassurance technique.
- ✓ Could the height of the hoop be dropped? Would this make a top bar move easier to spot?
- ✓ Can the move be performed slowly? Assisted slow movement should be used where possible to get students used to the move before it is performed independently.
- ✓ It is vital that all moves at this stage are taught progressively and that a range of emergency dismounts are covered from all positions – give students the knowledge to self-rescue. This is when strength and endurance come into play as you will need to ensure students have enough stamina to get out of the move safely and efficiently if necessary.

DYNAMIC MOVEMENT

When it comes to spotting dynamic movement, such as slides, rolls or drops, it can prove a much harder task for the instructor. This is when double spotting often comes into play. You may want to think about the 'end position' of the movement and the phases the student will go through to reach that point to help make the

decision as to where you would place yourself and your spotting partner. An additional spotter can help provide balanced support to the student or can help stabilise the equipment during the movement. Spotters can take different roles (such as one spotting the start position/transitions and one spotting the end position) or spotters can work together in conjunction with each other to help assist a rotation or circular movement from both sides.

STUDENT SPOTTING

It can be useful to spend time with students working on key spotting techniques to ensure that both their communication during spotting and their technique is competent. When students are learning new moves and a heavy spot is likely I encourage all students to try this move with an instructor spotting their initial attempt. As students become more confident with skills and a light spot or knowledgeable observer is needed – then I encourage students to work with each other as spotter/student but I would not expect a student to perform a heavy spot or a rescue spot.

At Spin City we want to ensure that all of your classes are safe and effective. When teaching Aerial Fitness as a group class, it is impractical for you to be able to spot each student, on every skill, every time. We recommend working with students individually the first time that you teach them a new move. This is because a heavy spot is sometimes required, and is the point at which a rescue spot may be needed if the student is unable to complete the skill. This allows you to visually observe their physical capability in that skill and also their mental understanding of the grip points, body positioning, capacity to self-adjust and dismount safety. Once you are confident that that individual student has a solid understanding of that skill, then they can be encouraged to practice it independently. Within a group class, students will therefore be working alongside their peers, sharing equipment and generally practicing the same skill, with some modifications when required.

SPOTTING IN YOUR ASSESSMENT

During the main demonstration of each move spotting should be addressed – this should be explained verbally and demonstrated for the group – ask for a volunteer to try the move and show the whole group the spotting technique.

It can be useful to spend time with students working on key spotting techniques to ensure that both their communication during spotting and their technique is competent.

When students are learning new moves and a heavy spot is likely it should only be attempted with an instructor spotting the initial attempt until you are happy they can practice without you. As students become more confident with skills where just a light spot or knowledgeable observer is needed, students may work with each other as spotter/student but do not expect a student to perform a heavy spot or a rescue spot.

Students may then work as ‘knowledgeable observers’. A knowledgeable observer should be competent to perform the following;

- Stabilise the equipment for the student or their position with light support (**reassurance spot**)
- Ensure the safety matting is in an appropriate place under the equipment
- Help to physically identify a body part (students may often need a ‘touch’ to be aware which their right arm or left leg is when working upside down, or across the body) **guidance spot**
- Visually observe the stage by stage process of the move and be able to raise an immediate flag to the instructor if they feel the learner needs additional guidance, if they are unsure of the next stage in the process or if they feel that the student has gone wrong at some point or may be in need of a heavy spot **verbal spot**

Although students should not be encouraged to provide heavy physical spotting to each other, acting as a knowledgeable observer can assist in keeping all the students in your class safe. At Spin City we feel that it’s important to acknowledge this, when working in a group aerial fitness environment. Educating students in this technique can also have a number of other benefits, such as creating a focused environment for your classes, where all students are directly engaged in the class itself, it can help students work at an appropriate pace stage by stage through movements – building up their stamina, teaching them patience, it can also help develop a community around your classes building long lasting relationships between your students and making them all a part of your team.

Spotting is a complex subject and Guidance and Reassurance spotting using verbal techniques and light touch should be considered as important as a heavy physical spot and should be made fundamental from the beginning of your students’ journey.

**You have reached the end of the
Intermediate Aerial Hoop Instructor Training Manual!**

Don't forget you can view the accompanying videos for this course by heading over
to: <https://vimeo.com/album/2751512> Password: SCINT415