

Development of Stalder and Sole Circle to Handstand

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As the new quadrenium began, all of us were scrambling to find a competitive edge for our athletes. Many of us realized the most underutilized bar skills, were the break hip skills, i.e. Toe Shoot, Stalder, etc. These seemingly unimportant skills were now glaring at us from times past. Their importance to our competitive advantage had become quite clear. In the past, these skills were performed to perfection. Names such as McNamara and Frederick immediately come to mind. I strongly recommend reviewing their circling technique. It will become invaluable to your approach at teaching these skills.

Circle technique can be done in many ways; I prefer the approach of Martha Frederick; straight shape (handstand), to hollow (drop), to pike (toe-on), to shoulder angle (stalder), and back up at shift point, in reverse order. There are probably a thousand drills to help teach these skills. They are all inter-related, and allow for lateral movement, to other similar skills.

Drill #1: Late Toe-On Training

Equipment:

- Vault Board
- Lowered Bar

The vault board is placed a comfortable distance from the bar. The athlete jumps from the board to a pike sole circle dismount.



Points of Emphasis:

- Late drop foot placement
- Smoothness of toe-on
- Head position
- And NO shoulder angle

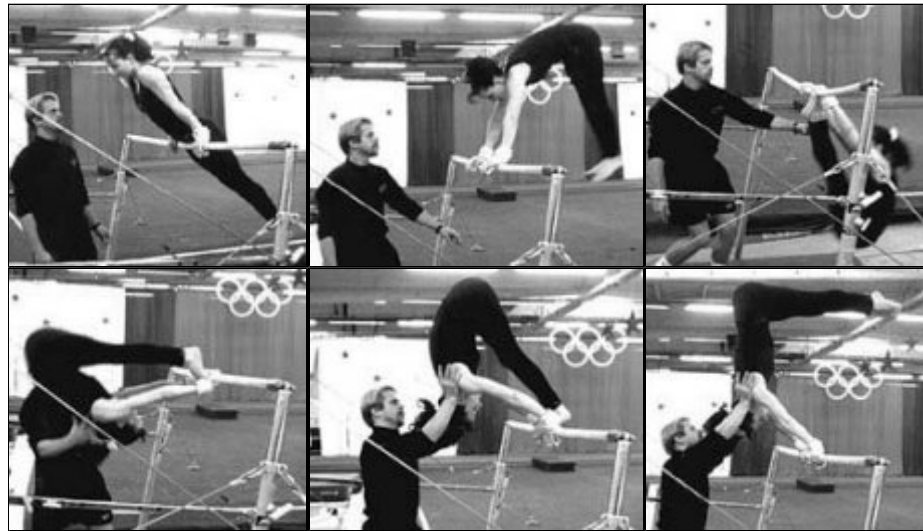
As the gymnast gains proficiency at this drill, raise the board for a more appropriate simulation of the circle drop.

Problem Area: Grip shift at toe-on contact. DO NOT allow any regrip once the gymnast has left the board surface.

Remainder of drills must be spotted!

Drill #2: Mini-Cast To Pike Sole Circle Around The Bar

The drill begins with a small cast to a pike, late toe-on. The gymnast rides the circle to stop point, shifts her grip and presses her feet off the bar 3 to 5 inches, and continues into the next late drop. Repeat 3 to 5 circles. As the athlete gains proficiency at the late drop and shift, allow her to progressively rise higher and higher. By the third or fifth circle arriving in the handstand.



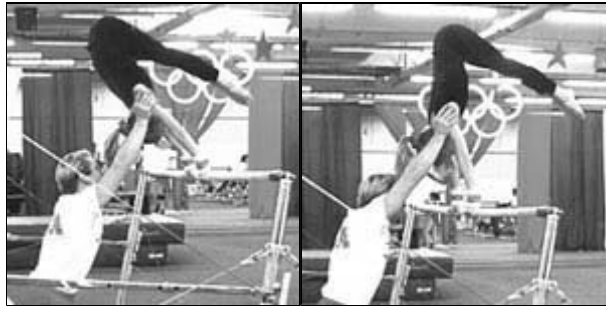
Drill #3: Straddle Support To Stalder Circle

Stalder Circles are done identically. (That is after prerequisite flexibility and static position training is complete.) The only difference in stalder and pike toe on drills- initial stalders may start in straddle support, each circle must finish in pike, semi-pike or handstand (feet together).

Equipment :

- Low Bar (Raised or Lowered)
- Two Spotters Shoulder Height





Problem Areas:

- Regrasp at toe-on problems
- Head position
- Early straddle
- Early shoulder angle (Stalder)
- Chest thrust or excessive elbow bend at shift point
- Early toe-on

These very same drills can be done in both front and back seat circles, Endo Stalders, and combinations of all the above. Again I remind you to spot each and every drill, until a high degree of proficiency is gained. The strap bar will also serve as a great supplement for hip rotation, and body position training.

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