

# REAL MEN DO PILATES

## Get An Edge On Your Competition



**Kerrie Lee Brown**

I have worked in the fitness and bodybuilding biz for ten years and am still an avid supporter and contributor to the industry today. So I 'get' the industry and understand that all who participate in this competitive sport are die-hard trainers with little room for change in diet and workout regimens (espe-

cially before a show). You're used to hammering it out in the gym, then heading home to eat, sleep, then hit the gym again, then eat, then sleep ... and so on. But have you ever thought of trying something different?

### **Pilates for Athletes**

Over the past several years, Pilates has become a huge part of the professional sports business. Top-dollar athletes such as NBA guard Jason Kidd, LA Laker Kobe Bryant, pro hockey player Carlo Colaiacovo, World Series pitcher Curt Schilling, offensive lineman Ruben Brown, and world-class golfer Tiger

Woods are known to be fans of Pilates – in order to stay on top of their game and prevent injury.

Now, to most hardcore bodybuilders, the thought of climbing onto a foreign piece of equipment known as a "Reformer" or "V2 Max Plus™" may seem a bit abnormal – especially with the mass you guys pack on! But today more and more pro athletes are incorporating Pilates into their sports conditioning, training, and rehab regimens.

Sally Belanger, Assistant Program Director for STOTT PILATES®, trains Toronto Maple

Leafs Defenseman Carlo Colaiacovo. She agrees that in order to maximize your performance and build power, you need to have a strong foundation and good core stability. "Pilates helps to build and strengthen the core muscular system, allowing the large muscles [primary movers] and levers to work on explosive movements and strength."

### **The Next Generation of Exercise**

Some of you may think that Pilates is a woman's workout – but you're wrong. The reason why so many elite athletes are



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incorporating Pilates into their training regimens today is because Pilates has evolved over time and is now focusing on the modern day biomechanics of the athlete's body with essential scientific research. This second generation of Pilates caters to athletic performance enhancement and gym owners are making Pilates programs more accessible for their patrons. In fact, STOTT PILATES® participated in a six-location pilot project with Gold's Gym – including the Mecca of Bodybuilding, Gold's Gym Venice in California, where they still have a successful Pilates program today.

"Pilates is no longer only for ballet dancers – it has evolved to help athletes accomplish their competitive goals no matter what sport they participate in," explains STOTT PILATES® President and CEO, Lindsay G. Merrithew. "And that's why top fitness facilities like Gold's Gym are implementing Pilates into their locations."

#### Benefits of Pilates for Men

Pilates helps athletes build strong, healthy muscles, improves blood flow by working the entire body, and engages all the muscles at the right time – therefore working your body inside and out for optimal body conditioning. The mind-body balance is also a vital part of this method of exercise – and is generally what sets good athletes apart from great ones. According to Matt Nichol, Head Strength and Conditioning Coach for the Toronto Maple Leafs, Pilates teaches athletes to be mindful in their movements – integrating their pelvis,

#### Benefits of Pilates for Men

**Self Awareness** – Learn how your body performs and functions

**Breathing** – Improves lung capacity and oxygen to the blood

**Stress release** – Overall sense of satisfaction inside and out

**Athletic performance** – Helps with overall focus and stress relief

**Prevents Injury** – Improves overall strength and coordination

**Focus** – Helps with mind-body connection

trunk and shoulder girdle in a safe, challenging and progressive system. "Improved posture and greater efficiency of movement are two of the biggest benefits I have seen with athletes that have supplemented their regular strength and conditioning training with Pilates," he explains. "Pilates is particularly effective in injury re-habilitation settings as it provides athletes with a challenging workout without impact or excessive weight bearing."

#### The End Result

So remember, all you guys who think Pilates is too "light weight" – the weight room isn't the only place to reach your athletic goals. And if you're as competitive as I know most of you are, then you will try anything to get that edge on your competition.

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