

Musings on the Barrels and Spine Correctors

By Laura Philips-Hampton

If I had to choose, I would say [spine correctors](#) are my favorite piece of equipment. Not only are they ingeniously simple and elegant, they get such instant results, and evoke deeply felt corrections and release in bodies.

It is speculated that Joe created the first spine corrector from a sawed in half whisky barrel. While we will never know for sure, we do now know that a lot of the stories Joe told about himself were, shall we say, “marketing tools.” Regardless of how the first one was built, many manufacturers have followed suit, and there are barrels out there in many shapes, sizes and even materials.

Both the small barrels and spine correctors (also known as the [hump](#) barrel) are used for a variety of body types and for movement that is both releasing and stretching, or in movement that progresses the body towards greater challenge.

What I love about them is the instant “ahhh” when you put someone on a barrel for a release or a stretch. Or the instant “ah ha!” when they learn leg series on the barrel, and realize what it means to move their legs from their front side, and feel length and powerhouse activation.

There is no limit to the choreography you can do on the barrels. Try teaching the mat series on the spine corrector; see how many exercises in the mat order translate onto the spine corrector. For example, rolling like a ball on the spine corrector, sitting on the seat of the barrel. You barely move, but being able to press the back into the spine corrector gives tactile feedback on where this movement is initiated. Curling off the barrel to “roll up” again deepens into the

abdominals in a way that is intense, controlled and very precise.

One of my very favorite releases on the small barrel is to start my client with her shoulders on the mat, and sacrum on the peak of the barrel. Slowly, with long breaths, she inches over the barrel until her shoulders are on the peak of the barrel and her hips are on the mat. Try it, especially after stooping over teaching for a few hours. You will find your own “ahhh.”

How do you find your “ahhh” moments? We want to hear from you! Contact us at info@peakpilates.com and [subscribe](#) to our newsletter today!