

A Handbook of Indian Club Swinging

By

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Strategy Games Limited, Sheffield, UK

Disclaimer

The exercises shown in this handbook and accompanying DVD were performed by experts. These exercises can cause injury if not performed correctly. Do not attempt these exercises unless you have had instruction from a recognised expert, personal trainer or professional coach. We take no responsibility for any injury to you or any third party as a result of attempting to perform these exercises. You are strongly advised to seek the opinion of your medical practitioner before attempting any of the exercises shown in this handbook and accompanying DVD. Your safety and the safety of others working out in your vicinity is your responsibility and you have a duty of care when attempting to perform any exercise or exercise routine shown in this handbook and accompanying DVD.

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First Published 2009

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ISBN 978-09562567-0-6

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Preface

I first encountered Indian club swinging over 20 years ago (circa 1985) at a local Judo club where one of the club members, Dr Colin Hughes, gave a short demonstration for anyone interested in watching. I was interested and impressed simply because of the unusual form of exercise being shown with what appeared to be quite large and fairly heavy clubs. In those days I was heavily involved in martial arts and practising Judo, Ju Jitsu, Aikido and Kyushindo (a mix of Judo, Jiu Jitsu, Aikido, self-defence and Kendo) and just starting my interest in Iaido (Japanese Swordsmanship). These arts required high levels of fitness and I was busy running and weight training at lunchtime on my own account.

A few years later I moved to a research position at the University of Sheffield where again I encountered Indian club swinging being run by Dr Colin Hughes at lunchtime on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at the University Sports Centre on Northumberland Road in Sheffield. Colin was using Indian club swinging as the basis of a fairly comprehensive fitness regime in which skipping, running, stretching and all forms of exercise were being used. This was a really great class for getting fit and cross training for my martial arts classes. It appears that Indian club swinging had been introduced to the lunchtime classes by someone working at the sports centre that had been in the armed forces and had learnt the art there. Colin and the lunchtime Club Swingers had picked up these skills and read further on the subject to develop their skills and continued the practice. Later Colin moved to the University of Manchester and I lost touch with him.

Since those days I have concentrated my efforts on a few martial arts and given up Judo and Ju Jitsu due to injuries and lack of time. However, I have not given up my Indian club swinging and still find it fascinating, great for keeping fit and strangely relaxing and invigorating.

I must say I am indebted to Dr Colin Hughes for leading such an excellent fitness class. I am also indebted to Professor John Norman and Professor Rachel Davey (now at Staffordshire University) for showing me how to do the swings in my early days of practice and I am indebted to the lunchtime Indian club swingers at the University of Sheffield for their kindness and camaraderie over the years. I am particularly indebted to Mr Krishen Jalli for the insight into really heavy Indian club swinging. We have included a section on heavy club swinging on the accompanying DVD and I hope that it will be an inspiration to all those people swinging lighter clubs to progress further in their endeavours. There are a number of embarrassing outtakes on the DVD too which show just how difficult heavy club swinging really is – even for experts.

I hope this handbook and associated DVD will pass on my knowledge and understanding of this art form.

Dr Mike Simpson, February 2009.



University of Sheffield Indian Club Swinging Group (Circa 1990) Outside the Goodwin Sports Centre, Bramley Field, Northumberland Road, Sheffield, UK.

Back Row (Standing) from left:

Graham Hough, PhD Student, PhD Student, Pauline (?), Pat Seyd, Dennis Regan, Peter Hannon, Ros Seyd, Colin White, John Norman, PhD Student, Rachel Davey.

Front row (kneeling and seated) from left:

Mary (PhD student), ?, John Gilbert, Derrick White, Mike Simpson, Colin Hughes.

Chapter 1. Introduction to Indian Club Swinging

Indian club swinging has been around for thousands of years according to some authorities and was originally used as a method of close combat attack and defence and it is claimed that clubs were also used in warfare. There is evidence that club swinging started in India about 7000 years ago because religious books such as Mahabharata, Ramayana and Gita mention clubs. It is said that Lord Vishnu and Hanuman always kept their Mace (a type of club) in their hands. However, clubs were invented by human beings to use as a weapon at the time of war and to keep fit and strong in times of peace.

The use of clubs certainly originated in central Asia but quickly spread to the east and west and various countries such as Persia, Turkey, Indonesia and the Philippines have some form of club swinging or stick system which has been preserved to the present day by wrestlers, martial artists and through family tradition. Indian club swinging was practiced as a martial art form where various weights of clubs were swung in many different ways around the body to improve fitness, strength, stamina and suppleness of the wrists. All of these exercise routines were aimed at improving the fighting skills of the warrior.

The British in India noticed that the local men, especially the wrestlers, were particularly strong and well built individuals and also noticed that the use of clubs was fairly common. Thus, Indian club swinging was introduced into the British armed forces as part of the physical training regime undertaken by the troops. This has survived to the modern day in the British armed forces physical training of new recruits. However, the civilian population also embraced the value of Indian club swinging for fitness and health. The American school physical education curriculum included Indian club swinging until about the 1960s. In the UK Indian club swinging was used by schools, women's fitness groups, and gentlemen's clubs (these were the modern day equivalent of a private gymnasium) up until about the same time. In the early part of the 20th century and late 19th century club swinging was very popular indeed. There were Indian club swinging competitions, endurance records were set and professional strong men and wrestlers were using Indian clubs to train with and to demonstrate their strength and skills. Several notable strong men wrote Indian club swinging manuals and regularly tried to break each others endurance records. Clubs were manufactured in large numbers commercially and in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some of these clubs can still be found in antique shops and attics.

The popularity of Indian club swinging appeared to decline after the 1960s. While a few older folk remember the art form many of the skills have been lost or preserved in manuals and books which are perhaps less than helpful in trying to (re)learn the art form. These books are now rare, hard to obtain and look almost alien in nature. If you cannot obtain the clubs either, then these manuals and the techniques they describe look odd and strangely out of place in our modern society. A recent experience of mine was at my local gym when I was doing some sit-ups with a club and was asked by a young woman what the clubs were. Before I could reply an old chap (70 years plus) picked up the clubs and did some very expert swings with them to the amazement of the younger people at the gym! He had not swung clubs for over 30 years!

At the present time (2009) Indian club swinging seems to be making a return. Many physical fitness enthusiasts, personal trainers, weight lifters and of course wrestlers have looked at the deficiencies of modern training methods and sought out the

traditional methods of fitness training such as Indian clubs, medicine balls, skipping ropes (jump rope), kettle bells, juggling, hula hoops, other circus skills and so on. These 'old fashioned' methods may not be scientifically proven to be better than modern training methods for athletes but they are more interesting, place unusual demands on the human body and human mind and add variety that modern training methods often lack. In addition, the individual can see progress in developing a skill as well as fitness or strength or both and this is especially important for those people not involved in or obsessed by competitive sports. Indian club swinging offers a way forward to develop the skills, the strength, the fitness and stamina of the athlete while also ensuring mobility and flexibility in the arms and shoulders. (Note: I have used the word 'athlete' to cover anyone, at any age, training and developing their skills and improving their fitness. I have used this word throughout this handbook as it properly describes someone trained or training in exercises to develop skills in my opinion).

About this Handbook

This basic manual is about Indian club swinging as I understand it. There appear to be two types of club swinging that can be found today. These types of club swinging depend on the weight of the clubs being handled and swung. The lighter weight clubs up to 5Kg (11 lbs) seem to result in a more open style of swinging clubs with big free movements around the shoulders and joints of the arm and including some elements of juggling such as throwing, flipping and tossing the clubs. The clubs are often swung at arms length and with greatly extended swings. This is the style I understand well and have spent more than 20 years practicing. This style has its origins in the British armed forces and is generally a good all round strength and fitness training style. I do not know if this style of club swinging has a particular name but I have called it the 'Open Style' to make it clear that the shoulder joints are used to the fullest extent. This style is ideal for physiotherapeutic treatments with light weight clubs.

Using much heavier clubs up to 20Kg (44 lbs) or more requires a different method of handling the clubs. The sheer weight of these clubs is such that they cannot be easily held and swung at arms length and instead the clubs are rotated in various ways around the shoulders and around the head with the arms held bent. Technically, these exercises are extremely difficult to do, require exceptional skill and co-ordination at handling heavy weights and require enormous shoulder strength – possibly beyond that which might be acquired from weight training alone – and take many years to learn and perfect. This style I have called the 'Closed style' as the shoulders are not moved through the full range of movement and appear quite closed in. This is apparent from the DVD footage we have of Mr Krishen Jalli.

It should be noted that there is a relationship between the weight of clubs used and the techniques that can be performed by the average person. Juggling with very light weight clubs (250g or ½ lb) is one extreme of club swinging. With heavier weights up to 5Kg (11 lbs) this allows for some juggling techniques but the 'Open Style' of swinging clubs is a more natural and obvious way of handling the clubs to the maximum benefit of the athlete. Beyond about 5Kg (11 lbs) depending on your size or build juggling becomes almost impossible to do, some of the techniques carried out at arms length become more difficult to do well and man handling the weight becomes more problematic. At weights beyond 10Kg (22 lbs) I would say that the 'Closed Style' of club swinging is more natural and the techniques are specifically designed with the shoulders and back in mind as the main area of the body being exercised.

However, the sheer weight of the clubs (especially at 20Kg; 44 lbs) places enormous stresses on all parts of the body and the back, arms, legs and stomach muscles are given a good workout.

The weight lifters reading this will be puzzled I am sure but it is not the absolute weight that is at issue here. In normal weight training one might expect to exercise with these sorts of weights very easily and on many exercises exceed these weights by many times. I do this myself and I can lift heavy weights on many linear type exercises such as bench press or lat pull down. The issue with Indian club swinging is the inertia, torque and momentum of the club, the out of alignment moves, the off-centre or eccentric rotational forces being applied to small joints (e.g. wrist, elbow) and small muscles of the arms and shoulders. It should be noted that in mechanics or physics that work done is force multiplied by distance and it is this moment or torque that is being managed rather than the dead weight – which at 20Kg is nothing for the serious athlete. The clubs are not dumbbells or bar bells or cable machines seen in modern gyms which are easy to use but instead they are awkward, oddly shaped, larger than metal weights and their centre of gravity is at about two-thirds of the length of the club depending on the shape of the club. All of these features make it hard to move these clubs smoothly and cleanly with the arms, shoulders and hands.

Thus, this handbook tackles the swings that can be attempted with light to moderate weighted clubs of up to 5Kg using the ‘Open Style’ of club swinging. Heavier weight club swinging techniques (the ‘Closed Style’) are briefly described in this handbook and Mr Krishen Jalli has kindly demonstrated these techniques on the accompanying DVD we have made. I am just a beginner in using these heavier weight clubs and so any mistakes, omissions or errors of description are entirely my responsibility and the reader is referred to the section on the DVD done by Mr Krishen Jalli. There you will find an authentic demonstration of really heavy weight Indian club swinging.

About the Accompanying DVD

This DVD was made during early 2009. The sessions were recorded at the Crosspool and District Youth Sports Trust, Coldwell Lane, Sheffield, UK, on the 18th January (Mike Simpson and John Norman), 1st February (Mike Simpson and Krishen Jalli), and 22nd February (Mike Simpson and Krishen Jalli). The soundtrack was recorded at the same time and is of poor quality in places. We hope that this does not detract from the educational and instructional value of the DVD. There are clear demonstrations and explanations of the Indian club swinging techniques on the DVD and in this handbook and we hope that the viewer/reader will be able to benefit from our experience. I must thank Mr James Brook for his infinite patience in dealing with the seemingly endless edits of the video footage and the (ongoing) discussion of the quality of the soundtrack versus the benefits and disadvantages of a voice over. The footage we have is a form of ‘history in the making’ and I was anxious not to lose the ‘natural’ sound of the clubs swinging and comments of the demonstrators during the swinging routines. The outtakes are also extremely valuable instructional material and these have been left at the end of the DVD for amusement. Please note that the footage did not need to be ‘bleeped’ as no swear words were used in the making of this DVD. The photographs in the handbook were taken by my wife (Elaine) and were posed for and in some photographs I look a bit strained. Given the size of clubs being used I can confirm I was straining somewhat to hold certain poses.

Finally, I have learnt a lot about Indian club swinging in making this DVD and I have learnt a lot about making an instructional DVD. Next time we will do it better.

Shapes, Weights and Sizes of Indian Clubs

The overall shape of the traditional Indian club is shown in Figure 1. The general shape of the Indian club was adopted for the Perrier water bottle. However, there are many variations on the basic traditional shape and this will affect the way that these clubs react or balance in the hands during a swing.

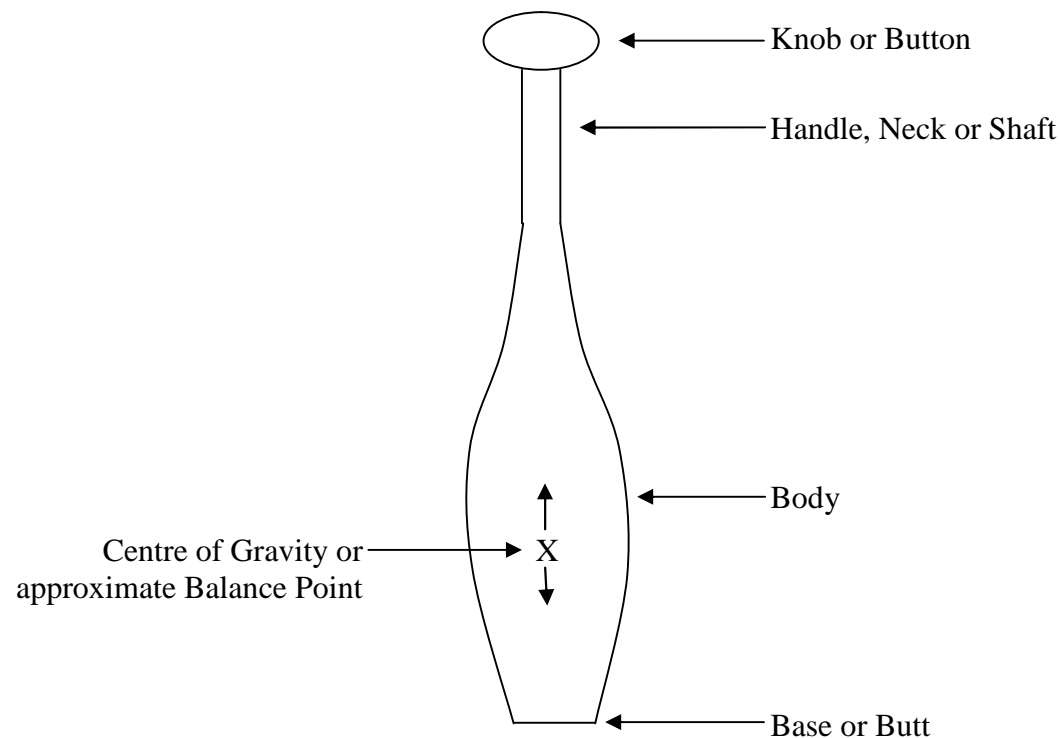


Figure 1. The Basic Indian Club.

Some important points to note about Indian clubs are:

- **The Knob or Button:** This part of the club is used to prevent the club slipping out of your hand during a swing. Certain exercises require the button to be held rather than the handle of the club. Therefore it is necessary to design the knob so that it is large enough and round enough to prevent you losing a grip on the club and yet small enough to allow it to rotate in the hand on the more intricate exercises. The button must be smooth enough to prevent blisters forming during an exercise but have sufficient friction or grip to allow you to maintain a good grip on the club. The button may need to be tailored for people with smaller hands or larger hands than average.
- **The Handle, Neck or Shaft:** This part of the club is used in conjunction with the button of the club to maintain control of the club during larger swings requiring some effort to perform. The size of the handle will depend on the weight of the club and the size of your hand. Heavier clubs will require a wider diameter handle so that the club does not break if it hits the ground or another club during a swing. I have had a club break after being dropped on the ground and had to make a repair using wood adhesive, screws and wood doweling but it is not easy to do well. It is therefore better to design the club with this in mind.

- **The Body of the club:** This is where the bulk of the club's weight is located and where the centre of gravity of the club generally appears to be. Getting the design of the body 'right' in terms of the overall weight of the club, the position of the centre of gravity and the way the club will swing around the athlete is extremely important. Clubs come in pairs (sometimes in threes) and must be fairly well matched in weight and position of the centre of gravity in order for the club swinger to gain a symmetrical feel when swinging with two clubs – one in each hand. Using the same material, usually the same batch of wood and exactly the same shape will ensure that a pair of clubs will have much the same weight and centre of gravity.
- **The Base or Butt:** This is the area at the bottom of the club and must be large enough so that the club can stand upright unaided.

There is something aesthetically pleasing about a well balanced, well designed and properly treated Indian club made from hardwood. Such a club will move in the way you intend it to and be a pleasure to handle and use. The centre of gravity of the club will be such that it will twirl in the hands without feeling unbalanced or eccentric. This will place fewer awkward stresses on the athlete's joints and muscles and lead to benefits of a smooth swinging action that develops the strength, skill and physique of the athlete. In addition, a well designed club will rotate in the air in a predictable manner when flipped or thrown and thus will be caught again with relative ease.

It is recommended that lighter clubs are used at first and for the more difficult and intricate exercises such as wrist twists. Clubs of between 2 and 3lbs (1Kg to 1.5Kg) are appropriate for beginners and for people less experienced at fitness exercises. Once you have become fairly proficient at the club swinging exercises with lighter clubs you can progress on to heavier clubs and develop your overall strength and fitness further. There is usually a transition period between lighter and heavier clubs as your body develops to cope with the extra weight. Take your time to adjust to the heavier clubs by doing fewer swings with the heavier clubs at first and switch between lighter and heavier clubs depending on your overall condition and the exercise you are doing.

The Traditional 'Tear Drop' shaped clubs are useful for children, or adults attempting the intricate wrist twists, turns, and snakes shown in some of the older Club Swinging manuals produced in the late 19th and early 20th century. Physiotherapists might also consider these and other light weight clubs for recuperating athletes with injuries. Some clubs of various shapes and sizes are shown below. These clubs have been found to be excellent for club swinging.



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Photograph of Indian Clubs (Size 1, Very Small, is on the left ascending to Size 8. on the right.)

Note: Suitably sized Indian Clubs are available from the author (Appendix 1.)

Traditional Tear Drop Design



Traditional 'Tear drop' shaped Indian Clubs.

Materials, Treatments and Storage of Indian Clubs

Materials

Indian clubs are traditionally made from hardwoods or semi-hardwoods such as Beech, Elm, and Willow but any hardwood of fairly uniform density and close grain will suffice. Other materials that have been used are plastics (usually for lightweight juggling clubs) and adjustable, often heavy, metal weights on metal rods (usually used by weight training and body building specialists). Some modern cast iron clubs are available, sometimes called 'bear clubs', and these are much heavier than the equivalent sized wooden club. Traditional Indian clubs were made of wood and some were given additional metal weights to make them heavier and adjustable. The very heavy weights of clubs made from wood and metal are really only used by specialists with expertise in manipulating very heavy weights. These types of clubs are not recommended for beginners and even experienced club swingers would not be able to perform the larger swings without risk of injury.

It is worth noting that, nowadays, it is quite difficult and expensive to obtain larger blocks of hardwoods and it is often necessary to make Indian clubs from laminates (i.e. layers) of wooden planks glued together and then turned to the desired shape. These clubs can look very attractive if carefully hand-sanded to a smooth finish and treated with several layers of a clear hard glaze varnish to bring out the shape and colour of the wood grain. Clubs can be made from a variety of hardwoods and in some older Indian club swinging manuals Willow has been suggested as a good material.

Not Recommended: It is not advisable to make Indian clubs from softwoods because the resulting clubs will be lighter, less resilient to knocks and prone to denting when dropped or knocked together. Dropping softwood clubs on the ground will result in dents and the clubs may break or split. Such softwood clubs may also be unpleasant when being used in the hands due to potential splinters. If soft wood clubs are made it is absolutely essential that the wood is treated with a tough hard glaze varnish that will protect the hands and help to protect the wood from dirt and moisture. In general, softwoods will be less resilient to water and dirt damage than hard woods.

Treatments

Two basic treatments to preserve the wooden clubs have been tried in the past. These are:

- **Recommended:** Clubs made from hardwoods can be hand sanded to a smooth finish, carefully cleaned with a damp lint free cloth to remove any dust and, after drying, varnished with several coats of a clear hard glaze type of varnish. This type of treatment is strongly recommended if you like the look of natural wood grain and want the clubs to last. Some wood stain hard glaze type varnishes can also be used but may be less aesthetically pleasing to look at. Remember to varnish the base of the club to protect against dirt and water damage when clubs are used outside on grass. Clubs made or indeed refurbished in this way are very pleasing to look at and handle.
- The use of Danish oil has also been tried but can be somewhat unsatisfactory. I have found that despite the initial striking results of applying Danish oil, which brings out the natural grain of the wood, the sticky feel to the clubs is not very pleasant especially on hot days. I would not recommend using Danish oil for this

reason. Also if you change your mind and want to varnish the clubs after treating them with Danish oil you will have to remove any trace of Danish oil and sand the clubs down to a smooth oil free finish before attempting to varnish the clubs.

Warning: Do not apply oils containing resin, such as Linseed oil, because the resin will make the clubs feel very sticky even in cool weather and virtually unbearable to use in hot weather.

Other treatments for wooden clubs that have been tried are painting them a colour and then decorating with stripes, spirals, stars and so on. These clubs look very attractive and were once manufactured commercially like this. Although paint is the equivalent of applying varnish I have noticed that paint tends to lose its colour with time and damage from handling may be more visible and less attractive in the longer term than simply applying a clear hard glaze varnish. Varnish can be renewed every so often and the club still looks very pleasing.

Storage of Clubs

It is strongly recommended that clubs made of wood are stored in a cool dry place and in a cupboard. It is not advisable to place wooden clubs near a source of heat (e.g. radiators, hot water tanks, direct sunlight) for prolonged periods as this will dry out the wood over time and make them more brittle and prone to breaking on impact with each other or when dropped on a hard floor.

Refurbishing Indian Clubs

It is occasionally necessary to refurbish your Indian clubs and this is easy for modern clubs. All you need to do is sand the clubs down with a fine sandpaper, fill any serious dents with wood filler and sand the filler down to match the shape of the club and then varnish the club with several coats of a clear hard glaze varnish.

For antique clubs I strongly recommend consulting a specialist in antique wood and furniture restoration.

Chapter 2. Getting Started, Warming up and Warming Down

Introduction

This chapter deals with the basics of getting started and the importance of warming up before practice and warming down after practice. It is also useful to understand some basic points about fitness training in general.

Indian club swinging can involve almost all the muscles of the body in one complete exercise system and when combined with skipping (jump rope) routines and other simple exercises, with and without equipment, Indian club swinging can form the basis of a very demanding fitness regime. It is therefore extremely important that you warm up your muscles and prepare them for the exercises you intend to do.

If you do not warm up and prepare for the activity but simply go from resting to extreme activity you risk a number of problems and symptoms. For example:

- The pulse rate will increase very rapidly and put a sudden strain on the cardio-vascular system. Abnormal electrical signals to the heart may appear and may cause some arrhythmia or even a heart attack in unfit or overweight people.
- The various systems of the body such as the anaerobic system (which produces lactic acid in the muscles) may overload causing pain and make it difficult to continue to exercise safely.
- Other muscles in the body could be overloaded causing micro-damage or tears. In addition, ligaments may also be damaged or torn in extreme cases.
- Some muscles may be overheated and this could reduce the duration of the exercise, as the muscles will be unable to operate normally. Usually, this is seen in weight trainers where the muscles become ‘pumped up’, solid and almost immovable.

Warming up

The aim of warming up is to prepare the mind and body for exercise so that you can perform the exercises and improve your overall performance while at the same time avoiding (or at least greatly reducing the risk) of any injury. The human body has a number of systems involved in any exercise routine. These are:

- **The cardio-vascular system (heart, lungs and circulation).** This system is designed to deliver blood, containing oxygen to the muscles and removes carbon dioxide and other by-products of exercise from the muscles. The circulation of the blood also takes heat away from the muscles and delivers fluids to the sweat glands.
- **The musculo-skeletal system (muscles and tendons).** There are many moveable joints or joint complexes in the body such as the foot, ankle, knee, hip, spine (lumbar, thoracic and cervical), shoulder elbow, arm (radio-ulnar), wrist and fingers. These joints are held together by ligaments and supported and moved using the muscles. These joints move by the action of gravity, momentum from other movements in the body and from the action of muscles contracting. The joints most affected by Indian club swinging are the shoulder, arm/elbow, wrist, fingers and spine.
- **The Neuromuscular system (brain connected by nerves to the body).** This system forms the major control and feedback mechanism for any physical activity

and must be fully involved in order to gain the most from any exercise activity. This feedback mechanism is sometimes referred to as 'hand-eye co-ordination' or psycho-motor system and is particularly important in Indian club swinging.

Almost any general warming up system can be employed to raise the core temperature of your body, warm your muscles, gradually increase your pulse rate, improve the circulation of the blood and bring into operation the lungs, joints and other systems in the body. However, it is important to realise that the shoulders, arms and back are going to take the major portion of any stresses from Indian club swinging and these areas of the body must receive greater attention in the warming up regime employed.

Warming up exercises

Basic warming up routines can involve any or all of the following exercises (in order of intensity):

- Walking up and down the training area gradually increasing in pace and swinging the arms by your sides in a pendulum motion.
- Standing and swinging the arms loosely about the body by twisting the trunk from left to right, starting with small movements and gradually increasing to near maximum movement. The same exercise can be done with the arms held stiffly in front of the body.
- Rotating the arms around the shoulders, rotating the wrists, stretching the fingers, moving the lower arm with the elbow joint and so on.
- Light jogging, with perhaps throwing a rugby ball to other members of a class.
- Skipping (jump rope), once the legs are warmed up, with a light weight rope gradually increasing the speed of the rope to about 70 percent of maximum.

Once warm it is beneficial to stretch the muscles in the legs, shoulders and arms before using the clubs.

The following warming up exercises with Indian clubs have been found to be beneficial for Indian club swinging after the basic warm up routine:

- Single handed pendulums with hand changes using light weight clubs. Gradually increase the range of movement and speed of action.
- Gentle circles around the shoulder joint with a light weight club in both clockwise and anti-clockwise directions and in both the front plane and side planes.
- Single handed heart shaped swings with regular changes of hands and direction (e.g. inner to outer swing) and increasing the number of swings until 10 or 20 can be performed with a light weight club.
- Double handed front pendulums with light clubs and bending the knees can also be used.

Once the athlete has warmed up the main club swinging session can then take place and this is the focus of this short handbook. Heavier weight clubs using one or both hands can then be used. Complex routines involving endurance or strength or coordination exercises can be done with a variety of clubs of various weights. Also using various postures can vary the application of the weight and momentum of the clubs. The informal or training stance allows the legs and body to 'push' into the

swings as you rise onto your toes and this creates opportunities to strengthen the whole body not just the arms and shoulders (see later sections on the details of each movement).

Warming Down

After a club swinging session it is important to warm down, stretch off and allow the systems of the body to return to normal. It is useful to have layers of clothing to take off and put on during a training session so that both warming up and warming down does not feel uncomfortable by either getting too hot or getting too cold.

Warming down eliminates lactic acid and other by-products of exercise from the muscles, allows the pulse rate to lower over a period of time, breathing will slow, intense sweating will slow down and gradually the body will begin to cool down. There are numerous books and manuals on warming-up, warming down, stretching and breathing exercises which may include Chi-gong or other oriental training systems and general fitness programmes. It is recommended that beginners familiarise themselves with these systems/programmes and use them as part of the routines involving Indian club swinging both for warming up, warming down and stretching off. This handbook is not intended to cover these areas in any detail.

Chapter 3. Basic Exercises with Indian Clubs

This chapter deals with:

- Direction of the swings
- Basic stances for Indian Club Swinging and holding the clubs
- Pendulum swings (single and double handed)
- Single handed pendulum swings with hand changes

Direction of the swings

Before starting to swing Indian clubs it is important to understand the direction of each swing so that you can follow the directions in this introductory manual. The diagram below (Figure 4.) shows a plan view from above of the direction of the swings relative to the person swinging the clubs. Please note that these directions of the swing are idealised and often slight or even exaggerated diagonal movements or turning at the waist are needed to accommodate the movement of the joints, to avoid hitting the head or legs and to facilitate the width of the clubs being used. Naturally movements up or down will follow an arc around the joints of the shoulder, elbow and wrist to create a smooth flowing action with the club.

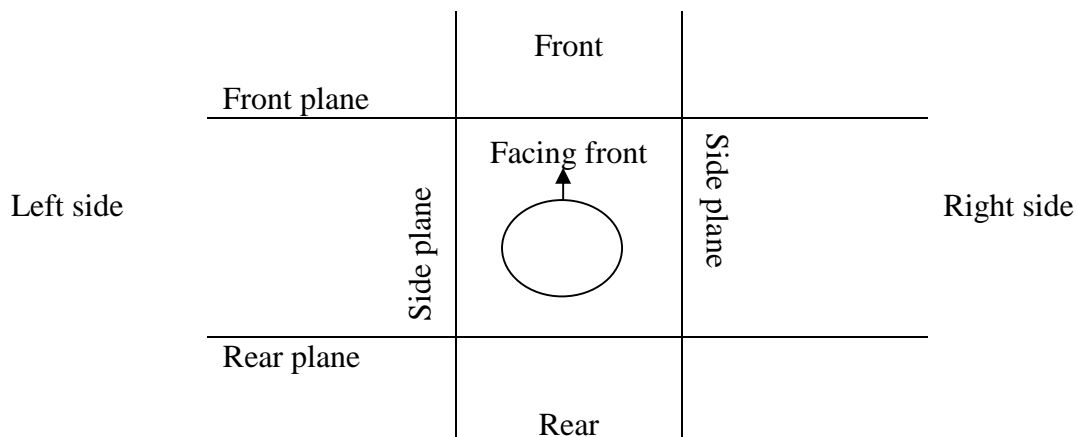


Figure 2. The Direction of the Swings – idealised planes.

Basic stances for Indian Club Swinging

Formal or Exhibition Stance

This stance involves the body being held fairly rigidly with the feet firmly planted on the ground. The toes of the feet are pointing at roughly 10 o'clock (left foot) and 2 o'clock (right foot) and the heels of the feet are close together perhaps separated by approximately one or two inches (2.5 to 5cm). The legs are held more or less straight but not locked out. The waist does not move during the swings, the back remains straight and the head looks straight forward. The swings are performed with the shoulders and arms such that the head, body and legs do not move to assist in the movement. The objective of this stance is to demonstrate the swings in a clean and effortless manner. This looks spectacular when a large group of people are swinging clubs together in unison as an exhibition of Indian Club Swinging.

Warning: this Formal or Exhibition posture can put heavy stresses on the back and it is advised that lighter weight clubs are used in all exercises using this stance.

Exercise or Training Stance

This stance allows a more relaxed posture to be used. The feet are initially placed at a comfortable shoulder width or hip width apart with the toes roughly pointing forward. The clubs are raised to the starting position above the shoulders (see next section) and the swings are performed in such a way that the feet, shoulders, waist and head turn and move to facilitate the movement of the clubs when swinging. The legs can bend and stretch and the feet can come onto the toes to push up and assist in the movement of the clubs when swinging. These additional movements can put extra energy into the swings which allows heavier clubs to be swung and forms the basis of a complete body work out. The objective with this posture is to swing the clubs in the most efficient way possible but without bending forwards or backwards. The athlete's body works in harmony with the swinging action of the clubs to produce a spectacular display of Indian club swinging that works all the major muscle groups.

The Starting Positions with the Clubs

Usually the clubs are stood out in front of the athlete with the clubs standing upright on the base. The athlete picks up the clubs with the hands and either stands with the clubs by the side or raises the clubs to the shoulders but does not rest the clubs on the shoulders.

In almost all the exercises there is a standard starting position. For the swings around the shoulders and head the clubs are held in the hands above the shoulders with the button pointing to the front. A rest position can be used with the clubs temporarily resting on the shoulders again with the button pointing to the front. The clubs can then be raised to the normal starting position. With heavier weight clubs the starting position will be with the clubs on the shoulders rather than above the shoulders.

For Pendulum swings the clubs are held in the hands by the side or slightly in front of the legs. For other exercises the starting position will be explained in the relevant section.

Holding the clubs

The clubs are generally held by the handle in the palm of the hands with the fingers wrapped around the handle and the base of the palm against the button. The thumb side of the hand is away from the button. It is unusual for this position to remain fixed during an exercise routine as the shaft and button will be used to control the movement of the club and so the hand positions will change somewhat during a routine. Sometimes the button will be held and sometimes the handle will be held depending on the exercise. It would be very unusual to extend the forefinger down the shaft of the club in the exercises shown in this handbook and DVD but very occasionally this can be done. However, please note that the forefinger would be 'locked out' in this position and may be subject to high forces on certain swings and this is generally undesirable. Most athletes find a comfortable hand position for each swing based on the basic grip with the handle held in the palm of the hand.

Details of hand movements and hand changes are shown on the DVD and in the photographs in this handbook.

Pendulums

Pendulums are the very basic beginnings of Indian club swinging and simply allow the shoulders, arms and hands to begin to warm up at the beginning of a training session. Pendulums are also useful when changing hands or the direction of a swing. All pendulums usually start with the clubs hanging down by the side of the body.

Definition of Pendulums: Pendulums are swings with an Indian club that are not a full circle or a complete swing. Pendulums are usually 180 degrees (sometimes 270 degrees) movements usually with a straight arm (but not always) and using the shoulder joint as the fulcrum or pivot of the movement.

Single handed Pendulums

1. **Side (Plane) Swing Pendulum.** Start with the club at arms length down by the side of your body. The club is swung at the side of the body on a plane at the side of the body. That is the club is swung forward and backwards using the shoulder as the fulcrum and the elbow and wrist are maintained in a straight line but the elbow is not necessarily 'locked out'. The club usually travels through 180 degrees from horizontal in front of the shoulder at arms length to horizontal to the rear of the body at arms length. The body can remain fixed facing forward or turn at the waist to facilitate both the swing of the pendulum in the plane at the side of the body and to gently warm the muscles of the body. The head may also move to look at the club as it swings to and fro. It is also possible to do this exercise in the formal posture without moving the head or the waist. Usually the knees are kept straight but not locked out. Bending the knees slightly can add additional movement that is beneficial. The club can be swung higher if required.
2. **Front (Plane) Swing Pendulum.** Start with the club held slightly forward but still at the side of the body. The club is swung in front of the body with the club moving across the front of the body from side to side 180 degree (horizontal at the right to horizontal to the left). That is across the plane in front of the body. Either the formal posture or the training posture can be used and the knees can be bent to accommodate the movement or kept straight.
3. **Front (Plane) Swing Pendulum and Vertical behind the back.** Start as in the previous swing. The club is swung across the front and then behind the back to vertical. This is preparation for the hand change that can be performed behind the back. The club initially swings in a pendulum in front of the body as above but then on the downward swing from the outstretched arm to the side the club is swung behind the back and up to a vertical position by allowing the wrist and elbow to bend naturally. The club is then swung down and out to the horizontal position at full stretch of the arm and the swing across the front is repeated or the swing behind the back is repeated depending on how comfortable you are with the movement.

Single handed Pendulums with Hand Changes

1. **Side (Plane) Swing Pendulum with Hand Change.** The swing is the same as the **Side Swing Pendulum** and the hand change is made at the extreme top of the pendulum in front of the body. The action is virtually the same as detailed in the photographs below for the Front Swing Pendulum with Hand Change. However, it is tempting to let the club 'float' in the air as the hands change grip and this is possible to do too.
2. **Front (Plane) Swing Pendulum with Hand Change.** The swing is the same as **Front Swing Pendulum** and the hand change is made at the extreme or top of the pendulum out to the side body but with the arm initially holding the club across the front of the body. That is, with the club in the right hand as the pendulum swing takes the right hand across the body to the left side it is natural for the left hand to take the club from the right hand and continue the pendulum swing until it is time to change again.



1. The Left hand prepares to receive the club.



4. The right hand leaves the club.



2. The left hand takes the club.



5. The left hand slides to the button and the swing continues.



3. The right hand loosens the grip

This hand change forms the basis of all the other hand changes in that the receiving hand takes hold of the club lower down the handle (i.e. nearer the body of the club) and then slips up the handle to the button.

3. **Front (Plane) Swing Pendulum and Vertical Hand Change behind the back.**

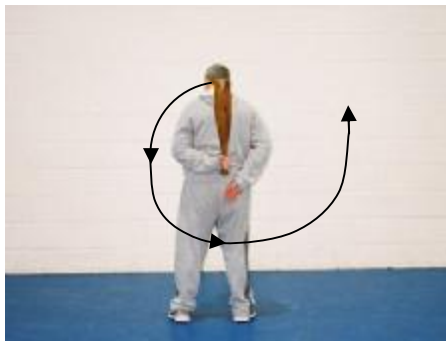
The swing is the same as the **Front Swing Pendulum and Vertical behind the back** (see above) and the hand change is made behind the back as the club rotates to the vertical. The receiving hand takes the club (see picture and detail below) by taking the handle just above the other hand. Both hands should have the thumbs upwards at the point of change. See the photographs below.



The left hand receives the club and allows the rotation of the club to continue as indicated by the arrows.



The left hand receives the club (detail). Note that the thumbs of both hands are upwards and that the left hand (in this case) takes the club and slips down to the button as normal.



The right hand receives the club and allows the rotation of the club to continue as indicated by the arrows.



The right hand receives the club (detail). Note that the thumbs of both hands are upwards and that the right hand (in this case) takes the club and slips down to the button as normal.

The hand change sequence of the Front Swing Pendulum and vertical hand change behind the back is shown overleaf. It should be noted that a continuous series of hand changes can be made behind the back by omitting the front swing pendulum and simply allowing the club to swing behind the back on each swing.

Front Swing Pendulum and Vertical Hand Change behind the back.



1. At the top of the front swing pendulum the hand guides the club behind the back.



5. At the top of the front swing pendulum the hand guides the club behind the back.



2. The club descends behind the back ready for the hand change. The right hand prepares for the hand change.



6. The club descends behind the back ready for the hand change. The left hand prepares for the hand change.



3. The club swings to vertical and the right hand takes the club above the left hand. The club rotates behind the back.



7. The club swings to vertical and the left hand takes the club above the right hand. The club rotates behind the back.



4. The club swings up and a front swing pendulum is made.



8. The club swings up and a front swing pendulum is made.

Double Handed Pendulums

1. **Double Handed Side Swing Pendulum.** (See Side Swing Pendulum). Start with the hands at the side. Both hands swing the clubs together from back to front on the side plane. The swing for each hand is the same as the Side Swing Pendulum. The knees can remain straight or for warming up the knees can bend as the clubs swing up and down in a natural rhythm.
2. **Double Handed Front Swing Pendulum.** (See Front Swing Pendulum) Start with the hands holding the clubs slightly in front of the legs. Both hands swing the clubs together, both going to the left and both going to the right across the front of the body in the front plane. The swing for each hand is the same as the **Front Swing Pendulum**. The body naturally turns at the waist to accommodate the swing and the weight of the clubs. It is easy to bump the clubs together on this pendulum swing so please take care.
3. **Alternate Double Handed Side Swing Pendulum.** (See **Double Handed Side Swing Pendulum** above). Start with hands holding the clubs at the side. Here one hand swings forward and the other swings backwards. The head and waist turn and the knees bend slightly and you should look at the club swinging to the rear. This movement helps in warming up and seems to be the most natural to perform. It is possible to remain fairly static if you wish. See overleaf for a picture sequence of this pendulum swing.
4. **Combination Front Swing Pendulum and Alternate Vertical behind the back.** (See **Front Swing Pendulum** and **Vertical behind the back** and also **Double Handed Front Swing Pendulum**). This pendulum exercise is performed initially as the double handed front swing pendulum with the clubs both going to the left and both going to the right. As one club reaches horizontal at the top of the pendulum with a fully extended arm out to the (say Right) side of the body you decide to swing this club behind your back while the other club swings down across the front of your body and out to the opposite (Left) side to full extension. The (Right hand) club going behind the back assumes a vertical position (see earlier) then both clubs swing back to the original position and you continue with **Double Handed Front Swing Pendulum** to reach the same position on the opposite side of the body. This time you decide to swing the other (Left hand) club behind your back while the (Right hand) club swings across the front and out to the opposite (Right) side to full extension. Then both clubs swing back to the original (Left) side position and you continue with **Double Handed Front Swing Pendulum**. This should be a natural movement with arms working in unison. It is not necessary to make the vertical behind the back every time it is possible to do so and various combinations of **Front Swing Pendulum** and **Vertical behind the back** are possible.

Alternate Double Handed Side Swing Pendulum.



1. Starting Position – clubs at your side.



5. Let the clubs swing in the opposite direction.



2. Swing the clubs in opposite directions.



6. Let the clubs swing.



3. Turn body and look at the rear club.



7. Turn body and look at rear the club.



4. Top of pendulum swing.



8. Top of pendulum swing.

Combination Front Swing Pendulum and Alternate Vertical behind the back.



1. Swing the clubs across the front plane.



2. Allow the right hand to swing behind the back on the down swing.



3. The left hand has swings to the left as the right hand swings behind the back.



Rear view of 3. at the top of the swing (detail).



4. Swing the clubs out to the right again and bring the arm from behind the back.



5. Let the clubs swing across the front plane to the left and repeat the movement with the left hand swinging the club behind the back and the right hand swinging the club across the front.



6. The left hand has swung the club behind the back and the right hand has swung across the front.



6. Rear view (detail)

Circles

Circles are also used to warm up at the beginning of a training session but circles and arcs of a circle are important when making combinations and setting-up hand changes. It should be very easy to do circles without clubs and with light clubs when warming up. Double handed circles can be awkward and only light clubs should be used. All circles usually start with the clubs hanging down by the side of the body.

Definition of Circles: Circles are swings with clubs that rotate the arm 360 degrees around a joint, usually the shoulder. Circles are usually with a straight arm (but not always) and using the shoulder joint as the fulcrum or pivot of the movement.

Single Handed Circles

1. **Front Circles** (clockwise and anti-clockwise) and with an overhead change. Start with the club in one hand held at the side of the body but slightly in front of the leg. These circles are made in the front plane in front of the body and in both directions (clockwise and anti-clockwise). Hand changes above the head can be made by coordinating the rotation of the arms and grasping the club with the empty hand at a point on the club above the other hand and then letting the hand slip down to the button of the club. This is similar to the details of hand changes shown earlier. Hand changes can be made anywhere on the circle in principle so long as the hands can be coordinated to make the change.
2. **Side Circles** (clockwise and anti-clockwise) and with overhead change. Start with the club in one hand held at the side of the leg. The club is swung in the side plane at the side of the body and hand changes can be made as in the **Front Circles** method above. Noting that the club needs to be guided to the opposite side of the body after the exchange of the club. **WARNING: Do not let the club hit your leg as it crosses from one side of your body to the other.**
3. **Figure of Eight Swing/Circle with one hand.** Start with the feet close together. This is not a circle exactly but fits in well in this section. Start with the club held at the side of your leg and make a circle at the side of the body and then cross over to the other side of the body until you are making a figure of eight circuit with your arm (actually it is an infinity sign shape or figure of eight on its side as you view it). You can change hands as you improve your technique. **WARNING: Do not let the club hit your leg as it crosses from one side of your body to the other. Keep the feet close together but retain a stable posture.**

Double Handed Circles

These circles are a real test of the strength of your shoulders and can easily show up any weaknesses in one shoulder compared to the other.

1. **Double Handed Front Circles** (clockwise and anti-clockwise). Start with the clubs held in the hands slightly in front of the legs. Rotate the clubs on the front plane in front of the body to make a full 360 degree circle(s) and keep the clubs roughly parallel to each other as you make the circles. When you wish to change direction or stop, then slow the clubs and stop in the start position and then swing the clubs in the opposite direction.

2. **Double Handed Side Circles** (clockwise and anti-clockwise). Start with the clubs held by the sides and then swing the clubs together to make a circle at the side of the body in the side plane at each side. Try to keep the clubs parallel with each other rather than moving them like you are doing the back stroke or crawl in swimming (although this would make a useful variation on this double handed circle). Keeping the clubs parallel is hard and can be very tiring at first. This exercise is not recommended for absolute beginners.
3. **'Helicopter' Circles** (clockwise and anti-clockwise above the head). Start with the clubs held by the sides and then swing one club up in front of your body and over the head and down to the side. Then do the same with the other club so that you appear to be making alternate circles with each hand above your head as if trying to take off like a helicopter. Change direction and do the same again with both hands. This time the hand moves the club to the outside of the body and to the rear so that the club comes over the head from the back and down in front of your body. Mr Krishen Jalli uses this method on the accompanying DVD as a warm-up and you are referred to the section on the DVD. This exercise can be performed with both hands moving at the same time together so long as you take care to cross the arms over and avoid hitting the clubs together as the arms cross above your head. **Warning: Please note this exercise is quite dangerous and you should take special care not to hit your head with a club. You may wish to use some protective equipment such as a hard hat or crash helmet. This is particularly important when teaching beginners.**

Chapter 4. Intermediate Exercises with Indian Clubs

Introduction

Once the basic pendulums and circles are clearly defined, understood and can be performed well it is time to move on to swings and other more demanding exercises. As before clear definitions will be given and clear explanations of the action of the movements will also be given. This section deals with:

- Single Handed Heart Shaped Swings
- Double Handed Heart Shaped Swings

Swings

There are several different types of swing based on the traditional heart shaped swings. The definition of a swing used here is given below.

Definition of Swing: A Swing involves movement of the club around the wrist, elbow and shoulder joints. However, heart shaped swings are normally regarded as the defining movement of Indian club swinging. In heart shaped swings the base of the club makes a heart shaped circuit around the athlete.

Single Handed (Heart Shaped) Swings

1. **Outer (Heart Shaped) Swing.** Start with the club held above the shoulder with the button facing forward. Either the formal or exercise stance can be used here. I will assume that the exercise stance is being used and that the body can turn to facilitate the swinging action. The swing starts from the club held above or on (say) the right shoulder, the body turns to the right as the club is put up high in a direction to the right side (or corner) using the wrist and elbow to full extension. The feet and legs can also be used to launch the club to some degree. The club is allowed to swing down across the front plane in front of the legs. Turn your body to the left as the club swings up and allow the club to come to above the right shoulder. Turn the body to the right and repeat. These movements can then be done on the other arm.

A basic version of this swing can be made by allowing the club to start on the right shoulder, swinging the club out to the right, then across the front of the legs, turn the body to the left and bring the club up to the right shoulder. Turn the body back to the right with the club on the shoulder and repeat. Try these movements on the other arm. Once this movement is understood it is easy to bring the club up to above the shoulder rather than on to the shoulder and a small swing is made around the back of the shoulder. Thus, viewed from the front the base of the club appears to make a heart shape in the air.

1. **Inner (Heart Shaped) Swing.** Start with the club held above the shoulder with the button facing forward. Either the formal or exercise stance can be used here. I will assume that the exercise stance is being used and that the body can turn to facilitate the swinging action. The swing starts from the club held above or on (say) the right shoulder, the body turns to the left and the club is put up across the front of the body using the wrist and elbow. The club is allowed to swing down in front of the legs to the right. As the club swings to the right turn the body to the

right and allow the club to come up above the shoulder. Turn the body back to the left and repeat the movement. These movements can then be done on the other arm.

A basic version of this swing can be made by allowing the club to start on the right shoulder, swinging the club out to the left across the front of the body down past the legs, turn the body to the right and bring the club up to the right shoulder. Turn the body back to the left with the club on the shoulder and repeat. Try these movements on the other arm. Once this movement is understood it is easy to bring the club up to above the shoulder rather than on to the shoulder and a small movement is made around the back of the shoulder. Thus, viewed from the front the base of the club appears to make a heart shape in the air.

Note: Outer and Inner Heart Shaped Swings are related in that they appear to be the same swing but done in opposite directions. This is why the double handed Parallel Swing works so well in practice.

Double Handed (Heart Shaped) Swings

1. **Alternate Outer (Heart Shaped) Swing.** This swing is more or less the same as the **Outer Swing** described above. However, here two clubs are used, one in each hand. The movement can be started as a basic 'on shoulder' to 'on shoulder' movement with each club as described above. However, the movement proper is more sophisticated than simply single clubs making an independent outer swing. Once the movement is understood the clubs can be swung in such a way that as one club is coming up to the shoulder the other one is being launched out. In this way the body can be moved from side to side (in the exercise stance only) and the momentum of one club used to counterbalance the momentum of the other. It is hard to explain this and the athlete is referred to the DVD to see how the movements link together. Once the overall movement is mastered more effort can be put into the swings so that a really good work out can be achieved. The intensity of the exercise and forces involved can be increased by accelerating the swings to higher speeds and using heavier clubs. **WARNING: do not do this until you have mastered these swings.**
2. **Alternate Inner (Heart Shaped) Swing.** This swing is more or less the same as the **Inner Swing** described above. However, here two clubs are used, one in each hand. The movement can be started as a basic 'on shoulder' to 'on shoulder' movement with each club as described above. However, the movement proper is more sophisticated than simply single clubs making an independent inner swing. The arms have to be coordinated so that as one club is rising up the other is being launched out across the front. The timing and motion of the body with the swings is a natural movement but it is difficult to explain and the athlete is referred to the DVD. Once the overall movement is mastered more effort can be put into the swings so that a really good work out can be achieved. The intensity of the exercise and forces involved can be increased by accelerating the swings to higher speeds and using heavier clubs. **WARNING: do not do this until you have mastered these swings.**
3. **Parallel Swing: clubs swing around in same direction.** This swing is a combination of the inner swing with one club and the outer swing with the other club. Again the swings can be started with the clubs on the shoulder and swinging to on the shoulder. Once the movement is understood the swing can be made

avoiding the shoulders. The basic start is with the clubs on the shoulders in exercise stance, turn the body to the left (say) (See the photo sequence given overleaf) and launch both clubs up together to the left. That is the left hand club makes an outer swing and the right hand club makes an inner swing. Let the clubs swing across the body in front of the legs, keeping them parallel with each other. Turn the body to the right and as the clubs swing up allow them to come up to the 'on the shoulder' position. Turn the body to the left and repeat the movement again. Once the movement is understood the clubs do not need to launch or land on the shoulder and the clubs simply make a circuit around the body. Timing the body movement to coincide with the swing of the clubs will come naturally in time.

4. **Parallel Swing with Change of Direction.** This is essentially the same as the previous swing except that when the clubs come up to the right (say) on to the shoulders, the clubs are simply launched back out to the right. When the clubs come up to the left shoulders, they are simply launched out to the left and so on changing direction after each swing. This exercise affects the triceps muscles in stopping the movement of the clubs and launching them back out by straightening the elbows to a degree. The body turns from side to side to facilitate the movement of the clubs. The rhythm and coordination of the body movement with the action of the clubs comes with practice. Refer to the DVD for details of the movement and see the photo sequence overleaf.
5. **Parallel Swing to front: Bending the knees.** Start with the clubs above the shoulders (or on the shoulders if you are a beginner) and facing front. The clubs are launched forward in a similar way to the parallel swings explained above. The knees usually bend to accommodate the swing and assist in the movement and this should be a natural movement. The swing continues forward and down past the legs (i.e. in the side plane) and to the rear as far as is possible within the limitations of the movement of the shoulder joints. The swing then returns along the same line and up to above the shoulders and down the back to a degree (beginners will bring the clubs back on to the shoulders initially). The swing is then repeated. An alternative way of doing this is that on the return swing the clubs are swung vertically up above the shoulders with the arms straight. Mr Krishen Jalli demonstrates this alternative method on the DVD.
6. **Outer Full Swing.** This swing is simply a double handed version of the **Outer Swing** with a few minor adjustments to make the swing workable. Start with the clubs held above the shoulders with the buttons facing forward. Either the formal or exercise stance can be used here. I will assume that the exercise stance is being used as this will allow the athlete to rise onto the toes when launching the clubs up and out to the side. The movement is exactly the same as the outer swing in that the clubs are launched up and out to the left and right sides simultaneously. Rising on to the toes can generate extra energy to push the clubs up and out to the sides. The clubs are allowed to swing down and across in front of the legs but the hands guide the movement so that the clubs cross without making contact. The clubs swing up, the arms cross again above the head and the clubs can be returned to the start position (for beginners) or launched up and out again without touching the shoulders. Make sure that the clubs cross over in front of the legs alternately one way and then the other on successive swings (e.g. left over right and then right over left). This will allow the shoulders to see the same forces and get the same workout over a session. See the photo sequence given overleaf. **WARNING: do**

not do this swing until you have mastered the outer swing. Furthermore on this swing the clubs must not knock together as they will then rebound and may hit your shins and cause some injury. It is best to use smaller clubs for this exercise until you are proficient.

7. **Inner Full Swing.** This swing is simply a double handed version of the **Inner Swing** with a few minor adjustments to make the swing workable. This swing is essentially the reverse of the **Outer Full Swing** movement. Start with the clubs held above the shoulders with the buttons facing forward. Either the formal or exercise stance can be used here. I will assume that the exercise stance is being used as this will allow the athlete to rise onto the toes when launching the clubs across the front of the body. Raise the arms and cross the arms above the head and make an inner swing with each arm and allow the clubs to swing down in front of the body and out to the sides and back up to above the shoulders. The basic swing is made by placing the clubs on or above the shoulders after each swing. To make the swing continuous alternate the way the arms are crossed over on launching the clubs across the body (e.g. left over right and then right over left) and do not let the clubs stop on or above the shoulders but make a continuous movement. This swing is awkward and initially will feel unnatural to do but with practice and careful study of the DVD it will become easier to do. **WARNING: do not do this swing until you have mastered the inner swing. Do not hit your head with the clubs as this may cause injury.**

Details of the Heart Shaped Swings – Single Handed Inner (Heart Shaped) Swing and Alternate Outer (Heart Shaped) Swing.

Single Handed Inner (Heart Shaped) Swing



1. Start position.



2. Turn to left, launch club up.



3. Swing out across the body.



4. Let the club swing.



5. Turn to right & Swing club up.



6. Continue swing by turning to left & launch or finish.



7. Finish position.

Alternate Outer (Heart Shaped) Swing



1. Start position (& finish position).



2. Launch the right club out.



3. Let the right club swing, turn to left slightly.



4. As the right club swings up, launch the left.



5. Bring right club up, let the left swing down.



6. Let the left club swing, turn to right slightly.



7. As the left club swings up, launch the right etc (4).

Details of the Heart Shaped Swings – Single Handed Outer (Heart Shaped) Swing (Extended sequence of two swings).

Single Handed Outer (Heart Shaped) Swing



1. Start position.



2. Turn to right, launch club up.



3. And out to the side.



4. Let the club swing down.



5. Turn to the left slightly.



6. Swing the club up.



7. Above the right shoulder.



8. Turn to the right and let the club rotate behind the shoulder.



9. And launch the club out to the right side again.



10. Let the club swing down and across in front of the legs.



11. Turn to the left slightly to accommodate the swing.



12. Swing the club up.



13. Above the right shoulder. Turn to the right, lower the club to the shoulder.

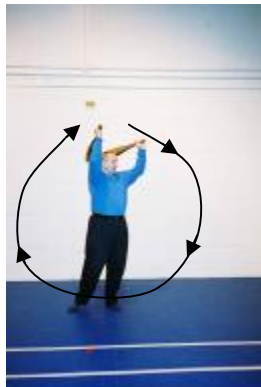


14. Finish position.

Details of the Heart Shaped Swings – Parallel Swing and Outer Full Swing.
Parallel Swing



1. Start position.



2. Turn to left.
Arrows show the overall movement



3. Swing clubs out to left.



4. Keep clubs parallel, let clubs swing.



5. Turn to right, swing clubs up.



6. Swing clubs up and continue or finish.

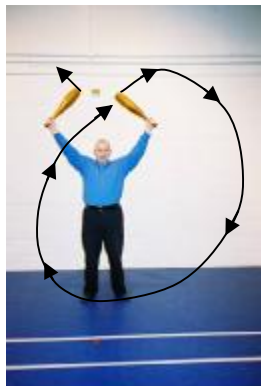


7. Finish position.

Outer Full Swing



1. Start position and finish position with clubs above the shoulders.



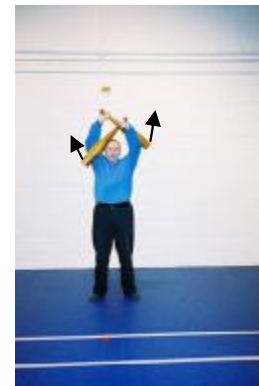
2. Raise the clubs up and launch the clubs out. Arrows show the overall movement.



3. Let the clubs swing.



4. Crossover (alternate on successive swings L over R; R over L).



5. Bring clubs up and finish (1) or continue (6).



6. To continue raise the clubs up and launch the clubs out again.



7. Let the clubs swing and so on (4).

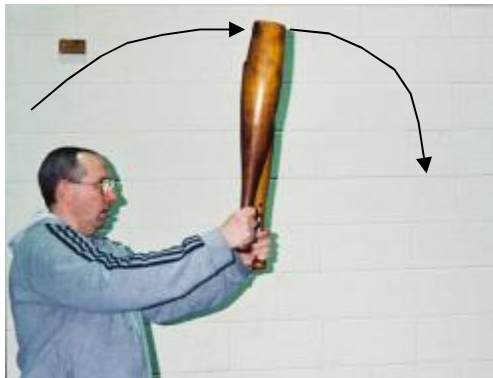
Detailed Movements of the Parallel Swing.



1. Start position.



2. Turn to left.



3. Launch the clubs up and out.



4. Let the clubs swing down.



5. Let the clubs swing across the body.



6. Let the body turn and follow the clubs.



7. Let the clubs swing up.



8. Bring the clubs up and



9. Bring the clubs to the shoulders.



10. Turn to front, finish or repeat.

Chapter 5. Advanced Exercises with Indian Clubs

This chapter deals with a number of techniques that are hard to fit in elsewhere or separately and so they are lumped together here as advanced techniques. Many of these techniques can make Indian club swinging more interesting and testing. For example the wrist twists or hand changes or throws added to swings on an ad hoc or repetitive and systematic basis gives a different feel and effect to the club swinging routine. It allows the athlete to devise combinations and be as creative as possible with club swinging routines. Hand changes are routinely used and some have been described earlier to facilitate certain swings or change from one hand to another when doing the basic or intermediate exercises. For a clearer understanding of these techniques the reader is referred to the relevant sections on the accompanying DVD. Thus this section deals with:

- Wrist Twists (inner and outer)
- A comment on Snakes
- Wrist Twists added to Swings
- Shoulder Rotations
- Hand Changes
- Throwing, Flipping and Tossing Clubs

Definition of a Wrist Twist: A Wrist Twist involves movement (a circle usually) of the club around the wrist joint with the arm either held fairly static or on the move with a swing. There are Outer Wrist Twists, Inner Wrist Twists and Figure of Eight Wrist Twists all using the wrist as the fulcrum or pivot point.

Snakes: are essentially complex wrist twists using the joints of the wrists and arms to create a fancy display of light weight club swinging similar to juggling. It is not clear to me what (if any) the health and fitness benefits are of performing snakes.

Wrist Twists

1. **Outer Wrist Twist:** This is usually done as an exercise or immediately following on from putting the club up at the beginning of a swing. Generally, lightweight clubs are used for wrist twists but heavier weight clubs can be used for outer wrist twists.

(a) **As a separate exercise:** hold a light weight club with your arm bent out in front (or to the side) of the body with the club held vertically. Allow the elbow to move freely in towards your body as you allow the club to rotate slightly forward, out to the side and down to make a circle around your relatively well fixed wrist. The outer wrist twist is defined by the club rotating outside of the arm to the side of the body and up to the vertical position again with the base of the club making a circle in the air. The grip can be either strongly holding the club handle or lightly holding the club handle or holding the button of the club depending on the mobility in your wrist. The physical effects of these grips are very different from the point of view of working the wrist joints and muscles. The easiest is to do is to hold the button and allow the club to make a rotation out to the front and side of the body allowing the button to rotate in the thumb and fingers to return to the vertical. The hardest, in terms of effect on the

joints and muscles is to strongly hold the handle of the club and make the rotation with the wrist, allowing the bent elbow to move towards and then away from the body as the club rotates forward out, down and back up to vertical. Generally, athletes use a suitable grip for the weight of the club they are using and very often the grip is varied during longer exercise routines as wrist twists can be very demanding to do.

(b) From launching a club up for a swing: an outer wrist twist with any of the above grips can be used so long as the elbow is allowed to move freely to accommodate the movement of the club to the outside of the arm. This is a natural movement and often immediately after launching the clubs up and out the arm will pause in the swing to allow the outer wrist twist to be made. Again the club simply makes a circle around the wrist to the outside of the arm/body as described above. You are referred to the relevant sections on the accompanying DVD.

It should be noted that it is possible to do a **Reverse Outer Wrist Twist** by allowing the club to turn about the wrist in the opposite direction to that described above. This is a very unnatural movement to me and it is not one of my normal routine movements when club swinging. However, it is worth trying.

2. **Inner Wrist Twists:** Inner wrist twists are where the club makes a circle around the wrist as a fulcrum or pivot but with the club rotating forward down and in towards the centre line of your body. Generally, only lightweight clubs are used for this exercise as they are shorter and this reduces the risk of hitting yourself in the face. **Warning: when performing inner wrist twists do not hit yourself in the face as this may cause injury.**

(a) As a separate exercise: hold a light weight club with your arm bent out in front (or to the side) of the body with the club held vertically. Allow the elbow to move freely out to the side and back in again as the circle is made around the wrist. Allow the club to rotate slightly forward, in towards the centre line of your body, down and up to the vertical to make a circle around your relatively well fixed wrist. The inner wrist twist is defined by the club rotating inside of the arm to the centre line of the body and up to the vertical position again with the base of the club making a circle in the air. The grips are as for the outer wrist twist either, strongly holding the handle, loosely holding the handle or holding the button of the club and allowing it to freely rotate in the thumb and fingers. The effect is essentially the same as for the outer wrist twist above.

(b) From launching a club up for a swing: an inner wrist twist with any of the above grips can be used so long as the elbow is allowed to move freely to accommodate the movement of the club to the inside of the arm. This is a fairly natural movement and often immediately after launching the clubs up and out the arm will pause in the swing to allow the inner wrist twist to be made. Again the club simply makes a circle around the wrist to the inside of the arm as described above. You are referred to the relevant sections on the accompanying DVD from putting the club up.

It should be noted that it is possible to do a **Reverse Inner Wrist Twist** by allowing the club to turn about the wrist in the opposite direction to that described above. This is a very unnatural movement to me and it is not one of my normal routine movements when club swinging. However, it is worth trying.

Warning: when performing inner wrist twists do not hit yourself in the face as this may cause injury. In addition, using two clubs in parallel can result in the

clubs hitting each other and bouncing off to hit you in the face causing injury. It is essential that shorter and lighter weight clubs are used for this exercise and that extreme care is taken. The use of protective equipment may be necessary for beginners and inexperienced athletes.

3. **Figure of Eight Wrist Twists:** These are essentially the combination of inner and outer wrist twists as described above. The figure of eight referred to is the shape made in the air by the base of the club. This shape is a figure of eight on its side or the shape of an infinity sign as used in mathematics. It is possible to start a **Figure of Eight Wrist Twist** with an outer wrist twist or an inner wrist twist whichever is the most convenient. At the end of a figure of eight wrist twist or series of figure of eight wrist twists it is sometimes necessary to make an outer wrist twist to get back onto the original swing – which is usually a heart shaped swing.

(a) **As a separate exercise:** hold a light weight club with your arm bent out in front (or to the side) of the body with the club held vertically using any of the grips previously described. Allow the elbow to move freely out to the side and back in again as the figure of eight is made around the wrist. Allow the club to rotate slightly forward, in towards the centre line of your body, down and up to the vertical to make a circle around your relatively well fixed wrist. Then out on an outer wrist twist and then an inner wrist twist and so on as an exercise.

(b) **From launching a club up for a swing:** an inner wrist twist is usually made first to finish on an outer wrist twist and continue the (usually heart shaped) swing but an outer wrist twist can also be used to initiate the **Figure of Eight Wrist Twist(s)**. The skill is in getting back on to the original course of the swing from the **Figure of Eight Wrist Twist(s)**. Any suitable grip can be used so long as the elbow is allowed to move freely to accommodate the movement of the club to the inside and outside of the arm. This is a fairly natural movement and often immediately after launching the clubs up and out the arm will pause in the swing to allow the **Figure of Eight Wrist Twist(s)** to be made. Please refer to the relevant sections on the accompanying DVD from putting the club up.

It should be noted that it is possible to do a **Reverse Figure of Eight Wrist Twist(s)** by allowing the club to turn about the wrist in the opposite direction to that described above. This is an extremely unnatural movement to me and it is not one of my normal routine movements when club swinging. In addition, it can be hard to get back onto the original direction if this **Reverse Figure of Eight Wrist Twist** is being used within a normal swing routine. However, it is worth trying.

Warning: when performing Figure of Eight Wrist Twist(s) do not hit yourself in the face as this may cause injury. In addition, using two clubs in parallel can result in the clubs hitting each other and bouncing off to hit you in the face causing injury. It is essential that shorter and lighter weight clubs are used for this exercise and that extreme care is taken. The use of protective equipment may be necessary for beginners and inexperienced athletes.

Wrist Twists added to Swings

Almost any swing, pendulum or circle can have a wrist twist added to make it more interesting or demanding. This is also good when doing displays or exhibitions in groups. Try some of the following routines:

1. **Outer Wrist twist added to single and double handed swings** (Outer Swing, Inner Swing, Parallel swing, Parallel swing to front and Outer Full Swing). Normally the wrist twist is added as the club is launched. That is, launch the club(s) up, hold the upper position and make the wrist twists then continue the swing.
2. **Outer Wrist Twist added to Side Swing Pendulum and Front Swing Pendulum.** As the club reaches the top of the pendulum swing either in front of the body (e.g. on the Side Swing Pendulum) or out to the side furthest away from the body at arms length (e.g. on the Front Swing Pendulum) an outer wrist twist is made and then the club allowed to continue the pendulum swing.
3. **Figure of Eight Wrist Twists** with arms in front and to side as a separate exercise and added to single and double handed pendulums. Care has to be taken in judging which double handed pendulums can accommodate the figure of eight wrist twist. Normally **Double Handed Side Swing Pendulums** offer the best (if not the only) option here.
4. **Figure of Eight Wrist Twists added to single and double handed swings** (Outer Swing, Inner Swing, Parallel swing, Parallel swing to front and Outer Full Swing). This is essentially the same as described earlier but with two clubs, one in each hand. The warning above also needs to be reiterated for clarity here.

Warning: when performing Figure of Eight Wrist Twist(s) do not hit yourself in the face as this may cause injury. In addition, using two clubs in parallel can result in the clubs hitting each other and bouncing off to hit you in the face causing injury. It is essential that shorter and lighter weight clubs are used for this exercise and that extreme care is taken. The use of protective equipment may be necessary for beginners and inexperienced athletes.

Note: that it is not possible in my opinion to make wrist twists or figure of eight wrist twists on the Inner Full Swing.

Shoulder Rotations

Definition of a Shoulder Rotation: A shoulder rotation is where the club is allowed to rotate in a natural movement about the shoulder. Usually the arm is held rigid at the elbow and wrist but not always.

1. **Outer Shoulder Rotation (Single and Double handed):** Start with the clubs held vertically out in front with the elbows bent at approximately 90 degrees. Let the club fall to the outside and rotate behind the shoulder to bring the club over the shoulder to vertical in front again. Repeat this movement.
2. **Back and Forward Shoulder Rotation (Single and Double handed):** Start with the clubs held vertically out in front with the elbows bent at approximately 90 degrees. Without bending the elbow joint simply raise the arm up rotating at the shoulder until the club is hanging vertically behind your back. Then rotate the shoulder to return the club to the vertical starting position. Repeat this movement. It is important not to allow the elbow to bend or straighten during this exercise. It is the shoulder which is being exercised not the biceps or triceps muscles.

Hand Changes

Definition of Hand Changes: A hand change in Indian club swinging is a movement whereby a club is transferred from one hand to the other hand but without throwing, flipping or tossing the club. The club remains firmly under the control of the hands at all times but is transferred from one hand to the other in a smooth movement. At some points in this movement both hands are on the club at the same time.

Details of Basic Hand Changes (Right hand to Left hand)



1. The Left hand prepares to receive the club.



4. The right hand leaves the club.



2. The left hand takes the club.



5. The left hand slides to the button and the swing continues.



3. The right hand loosens the grip.

This hand change forms the basis of all the other hand changes in that the receiving hand takes hold of the club lower down the handle (i.e. nearer the body of the club) and then slips up the handle to the button.

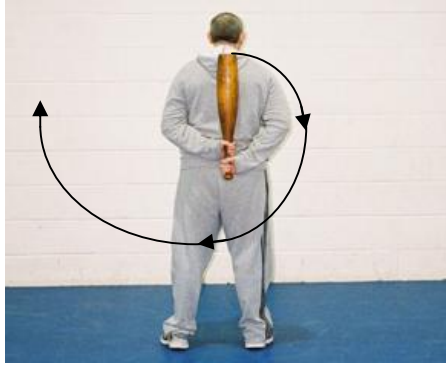
1. **At top of a Pendulum (Front & side).** These hand changes were dealt with earlier (see the photo sequence above). Initial practice is encouraged with simple pendulums such as the side swing pendulum (in the side plane), changing hands in front at the top of the pendulum swing. The front swing pendulum (in the front

plane), changing hands at the top of the pendulum swing with the hand out to the side. That is, change from right hand to left hand as the right hand reaches as far as possible out to the left and is at the top of the pendulum (and the club is essentially weightless) and vice versa with the left hand.

2. **Overhead on a Circle and Inner Swing.** This hand change is essentially the same as the previous hand change in that the receiving hand takes hold of the club nearer to the body of the club. However, in this hand change the club is travelling at speed and has a good deal of momentum behind it. It is, therefore, essential that the athlete is competent and confident in being able to take hold of the club at the right point in the swing, at the right point on the club handle and with almost perfect timing so as not to drop the club and also to maintain the movement of the swing. Thus, taking overhead (right hand to left) requires the left hand to coordinate with the right and grasp the club at the top of the circle (or top of the launch on the inner swing) and move with the right hand until the hand change is completed and the right hand having released the club drops away leaving the left hand to continue the swing. This is harder to describe than it is to demonstrate and the athlete is referred to the relevant section on the accompanying DVD.
3. **At Bottom of a Circle and Outer Swing.** Similarly, the change at the bottom of a circle or the outer swing follows the same routine. The receiving hand takes hold of the handle nearer to the body of the club as the swing travels through the lowest point on the swing and the other hand releases the club and drops away from the club to allow the receiving hand to continue the swing. This is harder to describe than it is to demonstrate and the athlete is referred to the relevant section on the accompanying DVD.
4. **Behind the back on an Outer Swing.** Again I repeat the diagrams shown earlier for clarity (see below) and to make it clear that there is no real difference between a pendulum change behind the back and an outer swing and change behind the back. From the outer swing the club is launched into the outer swing but then rather than allowed to swing across the front the club is guided to the rear and behind the back. The hand change takes place as described in the photographs overleaf. The receiving hand brings the club up to the shoulder and re-launches the club into the outer swing (or the inner swing for combination routines – see later) and continues swinging the club until a hand change is required. It is possible to repeatedly make the outer swing go behind the back and repeatedly make the hand change and this routine is shown on the accompanying DVD.

The main problem is being able to make a smooth transition from simply making outer swings to a change behind the back to making an outer swing on the other side of your body with the other arm. It is hoped that these photographs, the description and the detailed demonstration on the accompanying DVD make the mechanics of this hand change quite clear. It is then for the athlete to make the transition smooth, clean and then integrate the movement seamlessly into a club swinging routine. Such hand changes allow for continuous club swinging routines to be developed that exercise both sides/arms of the body. Such routines can involve any or all of the swings described in this handbook and may involve many of the hand changes or even incorporate flipping, tossing and throwing of the clubs. The possibilities for routines are almost limitless and give great scope for the athlete to develop a wide range of basic, intermediate and demanding club swinging routines.

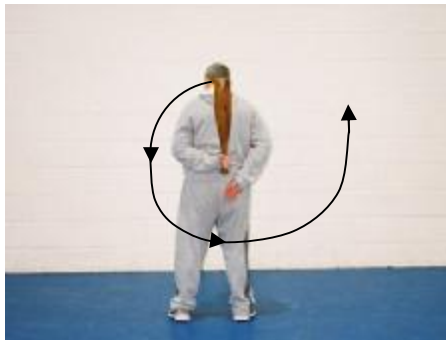
Details of Basic Hand Changes Behind the Back



The left hand receives the club and allows the rotation of the club to continue as indicated by the arrows.



The left hand receives the club (detail). Note that the thumbs of both hands are upwards and that the left hand (in this case) takes the club and slips down to the button as normal.



The right hand receives the club and allows the rotation of the club to continue as indicated by the arrows.



The right hand receives the club (detail). Note that the thumbs of both hands are upwards and that the right hand (in this case) takes the club and slips down to the button as normal.

Throwing, Flipping and Tossing the Clubs

These exercises can also be used to make up a number of routines with changes in direction and changes of hands.

Definition of a Throw: A throw is where the club is released from the hand and makes many rotations in the air before being caught in one of the athlete's hands. There are some examples of big throws on the internet where a club is thrown high into the air making many rotations before being caught.

Definition of a Flip: A flip simply involves one rotation of the club in the air and is usually caught in the same hand. This is very similar to juggling with light weight clubs.

Definition of a Toss: A toss of the club involves the club making one or more rotations in the air and is usually caught in the other hand. This too is very similar to juggling with light weight clubs.

In practice it is often difficult to categorise the actual movement as simply as these definitions. These movements are really only another way of making transitions from one swing to another. These moves can be practiced on their own or in combination with other swings. It is then up to the athlete to integrate and smooth these movements into a seamless club swinging routine. Here are some examples of throws, flips and tosses.

1. In Front (Single and Double Handed). The single handed flip and single handed toss are generally easy to do with one club. The club is swung (usually on a pendulum) and released so that it makes one (or more) rotation(s) in the air and is caught by the handle. The palm of the hand is facing upwards as the club is released. Thus, in a flip to the front the club leaves the hand on a side swing pendulum (in the side plane), makes one rotation of 360 degrees in the air and is caught in the same hand. This is easy to do on a simple pendulum swing but harder to do during a club swinging routine. A toss from one hand to the other works in the same way and is relatively easy to do on a side swing pendulum. Throwing the club is quite another matter and can be quite difficult to do. Only practice will allow the athlete to develop sufficient skill to make big, high throws in the air with many rotations of the club and successfully catch the club. Double handed flips and tosses are also possible to do but take time to achieve a degree of skill that would allow such a movement to be incorporated into a regular routine.

Warning: Please use mats and any protective equipment available to avoid injury and to avoid breaking your clubs if you drop them. Take particular care not to drop the clubs onto your feet or legs as this will cause injury.

2. Behind the Back (Single Handed). This exercise is very similar to the other moves behind the back shown earlier. For example, on an outer swing the club is guided behind the back as in the change behind the back movement shown earlier but the receiving hand is not there to take the club. Here the club is released so that it continues to rotate and come up from behind the back to be caught in either the receiving hand or the releasing hand. Catching the club in the receiving hand is generally easier to do than catching the club again in the releasing hand. It also facilitates changing hands in a club swinging routine.

3. **Side to Side (Single Handed).** This is usually a flip or toss done on a front swing pendulum (in the front plane). That is, as the right hand (say) makes the normal front swing pendulum movement in the front plane and comes to the highest point to the left side of the body the club is released. The palm of the hand is facing upwards as the club is released. The club flips in the air and is caught in the right hand again. Alternatively the club can be caught in the left hand (a toss) and the left hand continues with the front swing pendulum. It is possible to change on every swing or, if making a toss, to change hands on every swing. This is very similar to the hand changes covered earlier but is more difficult to do. This also allows a great variety of club swinging routines to be devised with flips and tosses to changes hands. This flip or toss can also be made after an outer heart shaped swing or after a front circle (if it is in the right direction).
4. **Diagonally to the rear.** This movement is usually made on the inner swing as the club swings down and up to the rear diagonal corner (if the body is turned slightly to follow the club) and the club is flipped. Here as the club comes up to the rear diagonal the hand releases the club and it rotates 360 degrees and is caught again in the same hand. The swing then continues with the hand swinging back down and up to the shoulder for another launch into the inner swing. On the inner swing the flip is made almost as a back hand movement, in that the palm of the hand is facing down to the floor rather than palm up in the previous movements above. This makes catching the club a lot harder as the palm then needs to turn over to receive the club handle on completion of the flip.

Simultaneous double handed flips and throws are possible with practice on several pendulums and swings.

A Final Comment on Snakes

I was never taught how to perform Snakes and I have not covered these techniques in this handbook. I believe Snakes can add an interesting dimension to 'fancy' Indian club swinging rather like wrist twists. However, I am not sure what (if any) are the health and fitness benefits of being able to perform Snakes. I am actively pursuing my studies of these techniques and so far I have discovered that I will probably need some shorter length and lighter clubs to be able to perform these techniques. I would be very pleased to hear from anyone able to perform Snakes and I would be extremely pleased if we could record these techniques for a second edition of the accompanying DVD and get some photographs for a revised handbook. Please contact me via the address and web site in Appendix 1.

Chapter 6. Combinations

This chapter deals with some basic combinations that can be used to build up a club swinging routine. This chapter deals with some combinations of all the various techniques seen so far. The list of combinations given here are meant to be an illustration of the many and varied routines that can easily developed.

Definition of a Combination: A combination is a series of any of the pendulums, circles, swings, wrist twists, hand changes, throws, flips and tosses that can be joined together to make a seamless sequence of Indian club swinging. These combinations can be designed to give a thorough work out for the athlete using both arms and shoulders equally (or unequally if necessary e.g. if one arm/shoulder is weaker than the other and requires strengthening).

Combinations

Most, if not all, of these combinations are shown on the accompanying DVD. They are generally easy enough to understand and I have only added in a few comments to assist the athlete in reproducing the combination. All of these combinations use one club only.

1. **Front Pendulum, to Circle, to Outer Swing.** Add in Wrist twist on outer swing if desired. Make sure the circle is going in the right direction to make a simple switch to an outer swing. The wrist twist or figure of eight wrist twist is usually added in at the top of the launch of the club into the outer swing but not usually on all occasions as the physical benefits of the outer swing will be lost.
2. **Outer Swing to Pendulum, change at top of pendulum, outer swing and repeat.** This is a fairly straight forward combination that simply allows you to switch from one arm to the other and do the outer swing. Adding a few wrist twists to the outer swing from time to time can be interesting.
3. **Inner Swing to Pendulum, change at top of pendulum, inner swing and repeat.** The pendulum used here is the side swing pendulum or alternatively the front swing pendulum whichever you prefer. The objective is to make the transition from inner swing on one arm to inner swing on the other arm seamless and smooth.
4. **Outer Swing, hand change behind back, Outer Swing and repeat. Add in Wrist twist.** This change has been covered in some detail earlier. Again adding the occasional wrist twist makes it a bit more interesting but not on every swing as the physical benefits of the outer swing will be lost.
5. **Outer Swing, Toss from Behind Back, Outer Swing.** This is similar to the previous combination but here the club is tossed from behind the back and caught in the other hand so that a continuous flow of club swinging with the outer swing on both sides can be performed. Again adding the occasional wrist twist makes it a bit more interesting but not on every swing as the physical benefits of the outer swing will be lost.
6. **Inner Swing, Circle, change at top of Circle, Inner Swing and repeat. Add in Wrist twist.** Here once the last inner swing is performed the next swing is a circle with a hand change at the top of the circle. Note that a complete circle can be

made and the hand change made on the next circle or simply change hands on immediately beginning the circle. It is your personal preference that matters here. Again adding the occasional wrist twist makes it a bit more interesting but not on every swing as the physical benefits of the inner swing will be lost.

7. **Outer Swing, Change behind back, Inner swing, Circle, change overhead, outer swing.** Add in Wrist twist on outer swing if desired. This is my usual routine which when combined with a pendulum and change as in the combination number 8 below will work both arms and shoulders as much or as little as required. Be careful to note the number of times you do this exercise and do the same number on the other arm.
8. **Outer Swing, Change behind back, Inner swing, Circle, change overhead, outer swing, repeat several times then pendulum, change hands and repeat with outer swing on other arm etc.** This is a favourite routine that often baffles beginners and even experienced club swingers. Take your time to see your way through the listed moves above. Following the change behind the back it is a bit awkward at first to make the inner swing flow naturally, this will improve with practice.

There is a lot of fun to be had in devising your own combinations and putting these together to make a comprehensive routine. Let your creativity work for you in producing a really good Indian club workout. Look on the internet for some of the older footage of demonstrations of Indian club swinging to get some further ideas and incorporate these ideas into your routines. Some of the group demonstrations available on the internet which are synchronised are extremely impressive.

Chapter 7. Heavy Indian Club Swinging

The footage shown on the accompanying DVD of Mr Krishen Jalli swinging a range of clubs from 2.5Kg to 20Kg is very impressive indeed. However we must issue the following warning.

Warning: Please do not start exercises with heavy clubs unless you have a good understanding of Indian club swinging and are physically fit and strong enough to perform these exercises. We strongly recommend that you seek advice from your medical practitioner before starting any strenuous exercise routine. We also strongly advise that you seek a suitably qualified coach who has experience of heavy club swinging and learn from his/her experience. Draw up a programme to gradually develop your strength and skill with these heavier clubs. Never practice heavy club swinging on your own as you may injure yourself and be unable to call for assistance.

I will list the sequence without comment or explanation according to notes from Mr Krishen Jalli and as shown on the accompanying DVD. **Please note that on the DVD Mr Krishen Jalli uses water to increase his grip on the heavier clubs. Under no circumstances must oil be used as this would reduce your grip and could cause an accident which might injure you.**

Warming up with a pair of 2.5Kg each Indian Clubs

On the accompanying DVD Mr Krishen Jalli uses the following techniques to warm up with the lighter weight clubs. The sequence is quick and it would be easy to miss a swing.

1. **Side Swing Pendulum:** Swinging both clubs and drawing to shoulder level.
2. **Side Swing Pendulum:** Swinging both clubs to vertically above the head, stepping forward with one leg.
3. **Side Swing Pendulum:** Swinging both clubs to vertically down the back, behind the shoulders.
4. **Side Swing Pendulum:** Swinging both clubs to the shoulders and bending down.
5. **Side Swing Pendulum:** Swinging both clubs to vertically above the head without stepping forward.
6. **Outer Shoulder Circles:** Swinging the clubs around the shoulder.
7. **Twisting at the waist:** Swing the clubs freely around the body.
8. **Alternate Outer Circles:** Swing the clubs with the right arm and then left arm.
9. **Double Handed Outer and Inner circles.**

Exercises with a pair of 2.5Kg each Indian Clubs

1. **Alternate Inner Swing and shoulder rotation.**
2. **Alternate Outer Swing and shoulder rotation.**
3. **Outer Arm and Shoulder Circle:** Alternating with right hand and then with left hand.
4. **Inner Arm and Shoulder Circle:** Alternating with right hand and then with left hand.

5. **Parallel Swing:** To above the head.
6. **Parallel Circles:** With double handed circles, swing the clubs around the shoulders as normal for a circle (see earlier).
7. **Parallel Swing:** Swinging round and over the head (double handed) and changing direction. Note the way the clubs swing over the head rather than come directly to the shoulder as shown with lighter weight clubs earlier.
8. **Shoulder Circles with a Half Squat:** Alternating the hands and also with both hands together.
9. **A Half Squat with Shoulder Rotation to Vertical in Front and Vertical behind the shoulder.**
10. **Cross Clubs, Lift and Swing:** Hold the clubs vertically, let them cross over as they fall inwards onto the opposite elbow and lower arm. Lift the arms up and overhead so that the clubs can make shoulder circle to come back to vertical in front. Repeat the movement.
11. **Shoulder Circles:** with both clubs.

Exercises with a pair of 5Kg each Indian Clubs

1. **Side Swing Pendulum:** Swinging both clubs to vertical in front.
2. **Half Squats:** to warm the thighs up.
3. **Single Club Arm Lift:** The club is swung up and onto crook of the elbow. Then half squat and lift the club with the arm, swing behind the back/shoulders and change hands bringing the club down onto the opposite arm. Repeat the movement with the other arm and so on.
4. **Inner and Outer Shoulder Circles.**
5. **Outer Arm and Shoulder Circle:** Alternating with right hand and then with left hand.
6. **Cross Clubs, Lift and Swing:** Hold the clubs vertically, let them cross over as they fall inwards onto the opposite elbow and lower arm. Lift the arms up and overhead so that the clubs can make shoulder circle to come back to vertical in front. Repeat the movement.
7. **Shoulder Circles:** with both clubs.

Exercises with a pair of 10Kg each Indian Clubs

1. **Single Club Arm Lift:** The club is swung up from hanging at the side and onto crook of the opposite elbow. Then half squat and lift the club with the arm and swing the club behind the back/shoulders and change hands behind the head bringing the club down onto the opposite arm. Repeat the movement with the other arm and so on.
2. **Half Squats:** to warm the thighs up.
3. **Cross Clubs, Lift and Swing:** Hold the clubs vertically, let them cross over as they fall inwards onto the opposite elbow and lower arm. Lift the arms up and overhead so that the clubs can make a shoulder circle to come back to vertical in front. Repeat the movement.

Exercises with a Single 5Kg Indian Club

1. **Lift from the Floor:** Swing the club up (note the handgrip) and swing around the back of the shoulders onto the opposite shoulder and then lower to the floor. Repeat on the other arm.

Exercises with a Single 10Kg Indian Club

2. **Lift from the Floor:** Swing the club up (note the handgrip) and swing around the back and lower to the floor. Repeat on the other arm.
3. **Single Club Arm Lift:** The club is swung up from hanging at the side and onto crook of the opposite elbow. Then half squat and lift the club with the arm and swing the club behind the back/shoulders and change hands behind the head bringing the club down onto the opposite arm. Repeat the movement with the other arm and so on.
4. **Half Squats with Clubs on the Shoulders.** This is done to warm/keep warm the legs.

Exercises with a Single 15Kg Indian Club

Note the hand grip at the beginning. Note also that this club is weighted with a metal insert in order to keep the size of the club manageable.

1. **Lift from the Floor:** Swing the club up (note the handgrip) and swing around the back and lower to the floor. Repeat on the other arm.
2. **Single Club Arm Lift:** The club is swung up from hanging at the side and onto crook of the opposite elbow. Then half squat and lift the club with the arm and swing the club behind the back/shoulders and change hands behind the head bringing the club down onto the opposite arm. Note that to repeat on the same side swap the club over to the other arm. Repeat the movement with the other arm and so on.

Exercises with a Single 20Kg Indian Club

This is a very large club and proved rather difficult to handle on the footage for the DVD. However, some useful moves are given.

1. **Single Club Arm Lift:** The club is swung up from hanging at the side and onto crook of the opposite elbow. Then half squat and lift the club with the arm and swing the club behind the back/shoulders and change hands behind the head bringing the club down onto the opposite arm. Note that to repeat on the same side swap the club over to the other arm. Repeat the movement with the other arm and so on.

The Outtakes

The outtakes on the accompanying DVD may prove to be rather instructive with these large clubs. The outtakes show that even experienced Indian club swingers can have problems learning new techniques and handling large Indian clubs.

Basically all the swings done in India are based on outer arm circles, inner arm circles, shoulder circles and combinations of all of these. Based on these principles it is possible to develop your own circles to some degree.



Mr Krishen K. Jalli and Dr Mike Simpson with a large 20Kg Indian club (February 2009).

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<http://www.stiltskin.org.uk/store/indian_swinging_clubs.htm> **Note** these are really juggling clubs and are very light weight indeed (circa 150g).

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Appendix 1. Obtaining Indian Clubs from the Author

Some good handling clubs are shown in table below. The approximate weight of the clubs is only a guide to the final weight of the club with the final weight depending on the type of wood or material used, the final shape turned and the moisture content of the wood itself. Clubs made from hardwoods such as beech will have approximate weights, depending on moisture content and the grain of the wood, as given in the table below.

Dimensions and Approximate Weights of Wooden Indian Clubs.

Club Size	Approx. weight (kg) in Beech	Approx. Height (mm)
Traditional ‘Tear Drop’ design Clubs	0.34kg (0.75lbs)	495mm
1. Very Small	0.8kg (1.75lbs)	485mm
2. Long Small	1.0kg (2.2lbs)	575mm
3. Medium	1.4kg (3.0lbs)	585mm
4. Large	1.9kg (4.25lbs)	620mm
5. Quite Big (white)	2.5kg (5.5lbs)	625mm
6. Logs	3.3kg (7.25lbs)	630mm
7. Small Meels	4.0Kg (8.8lbs)	650mm
8. Large Meels	6.0Kg (13.2lbs)	675mm

Note: Please refer to picture of clubs overleaf. Clubs are listed from left to right.

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We try to ensure that a pair of clubs each weighs approximately the same.

Clubs can be made to any given design (or specified weight) up to 3.3m long and 18inches in diameter. All clubs are made from either Beech or American Poplar from sustainable forests in the north of England and are produced locally.

Clubs made to these specifications are available from the author at:

Dr Mike Simpson
13, Goodison Rise,
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S6 5HW
United Kingdom

Tel: (0114) 2344480 or 07716516475

Email: m.simpson@shef.ac.uk



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Photograph of Indian Clubs of the same dimensions as those in the table (Size 1. Very Small, is on the left ascending to Size 8. on the right).

Note: Suitably sized Indian Clubs are available from the author.

Traditional Tear Drop Design



Traditional 'Tear drop' shaped Indian Clubs.