

*Swingbell*

# ROPERCISE

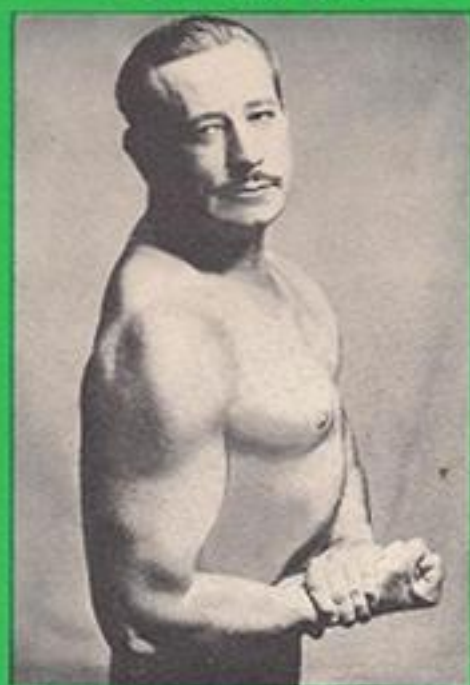
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# **ROPERCISE**

A METHOD OF SCIENTIFIC EXERCISE EMPLOYING  
A SHORT ROPE AS A CONNECTION BETWEEN  
THE VARIOUS MUSCLE GROUPS IN THE BODY

By

**BILLY VAN**

ILLUSTRATIONS POSED BY GEORGE E. CROWLE

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## **ROPERCISE**

Billy Van's Complete Strength,  
Health and Bodybuilding Course

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Printed in the United States of America

Published at 4834 Art Street,  
San Diego 15, California.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction .....	3
General Rules .....	4
The Rope .....	5
The Number of Repetitions .....	5
The Biceps .....	6
The Triceps .....	9
The Legs .....	12
The Calf .....	13
The Chest .....	14
The Upper Back .....	15
The Lower Back .....	19
The Shoulders .....	22
The Neck .....	24
The Abdominals .....	25
End of Part One .....	26
Three Alternate Exercises .....	26
The First Alternate .....	28
The Second Alternate .....	30
The Third Alternate .....	33
Special and Advanced Exercises .....	35
The Front Raise .....	35
The Shoulder Shrug .....	35
The Advanced Method of Breathing .....	35
The Advanced Pull-Down .....	36
The Advanced Side-Pull .....	36
The Compound Exercise .....	37
The Advanced Abdominals .....	38
Diminished Resistance .....	38
Conclusion .....	40



## INTRODUCING ROPERCISE

This entirely new, scientific method of exercise (called "Ropercise," as a short rope is used in performing the various movements) was developed by Billy Van after years of physical training experience and research, not only by experiments on his own body, but on dozens of private pupils as well. The results were so startling and gratifying that this Course has been prepared with a sincere desire to enable *everyone* to possess a strong, healthy body and a sharp, active mind.

The same blood that flows through the veins and arteries of the body also flows through the brain. If the blood is fresh, thoroughly oxygenized, and well circulated, the mind will respond much more quickly to all impulses and will be many times more alert. Most persons realize that the mind has great power and control over the body, but there are very few who fully appreciate the tremendous aid the body can give to the mind.

When the correct muscle groups in the body are properly and scientifically exercised, the adjacent internal organs are also strengthened and revitalized. This is actually the result most desired from exercise, as this renewed condition gives one that wonderful feeling of well-being, energy, and vitality.

In order to build muscle quickly and correctly, some form of resistance must be used. Formerly, this was done by the use of weights, elastic cables, coiled springs, or the resistance of one muscle against another. All of these methods have their disadvantages. Weights are cumbersome, take up a lot of room, and are impossible to carry around when traveling. Furthermore—no matter which muscle group is being exercised—a weight can pull only *one way* . . . straight down. Cables and springs wear out in a short time, requiring a new investment. Also, the tension varies in cables and springs with the length to which they are stretched, so the muscle being exercised does not get the same resistance from extension to contraction. Pitting one muscle directly against another requires too much mental concentration for the untrained person to accomplish good results. Also, not a large enough group of muscles is involved simultaneously by this method to bring out the best development.

With the "ROPERCISE" system of scientific exercise we use Nature's own springs and elastic cables (the muscles themselves) through the medium of a short rope. This new principle utilizes a force technically described as *Kinetic Action*, discovered and developed by Billy Van, and defined as *force actually exerted through motion*. In actual use, it is the only method which places the *same even amount of resistance* on the muscles throughout their entire range of movement. A completely tested and proven principle, *Kinetic Action* works on the muscle groups from a new and entirely different angle, producing faster and better results.

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## GENERAL RULES

The following rules have an important general bearing on all of the ensuing exercises, and should be studied carefully and referred to from time to time.

In using the Rope, remember to keep it always under tight tension between the hands, or hand and foot.

Do not work one muscle group too strenuously against the other at first. Take it easy for the first few days.

The exercises should be done slowly enough so that you can feel a steady, strong pull on the muscles throughout their entire movement, up and down, or back and forth. One *complete* movement (from start back to start) of *each* repetition should take about 4 seconds.

Adjust the position of your hands on the Rope so that you can work the muscles from complete extension to complete contraction. If a movement requires straightening the arm, push or pull the arm out to its limit, locking the elbow.

Always try a few movements first, *without resistance*, to get the correct grip adjustment.

After doing an exercise a few repetitions, stop and check the instructions and illustrations carefully to make sure you are doing the movements correctly.

Correct breathing is very important. Never hold your breath during any exercise. In fact, force your breathing.

You may get slightly dizzy at first when doing some of these exercises, but don't be alarmed. You are merely taking in more oxygen than the working muscle is burning up, and after a few exercise periods you will not experience this sensation.

If you wish to gain weight, use more resistance, *work hard*, and don't do more than ten or twelve repetitions on each exercise. If your desire is to lose weight, do more repetitions and don't use quite so much pressure. To gain weight, exercise only four days per week. To lose weight, work six or seven days per week until you have reached your desired goal. Then three or four periods per week will keep you in top condition.

Rest a bit after each exercise. Don't rush from one to another. However, it is better to walk around or stand than to sit down.

Do not exercise in the morning as soon as you arise. It takes the body a couple of hours to wake up. Don't exercise within an hour and a half after a meal. If you exercise in the evening, don't go to bed *immediately* afterward. Relax a bit until the increased circulation returns to normal—then you will go to sleep quickly and soundly.

After you have become familiar with the exercises and don't have to think so much about how to do them, *concentrate strongly* with your mind on the muscles you are working on, and visualize them as you wish them to be.

Take your measurements and weight before starting this Course, and after a few weeks see how much you have gained or lost. Don't be discouraged at first, as it requires most people about six weeks to get their bodies in condition, after which time results are most gratifying.



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Whenever possible, work in front of a mirror.

For best results, do the exercises in the exact order they are given in this Course.

Unless the weather is extremely warm, keep covered with some sort of loose clothing while exercising.

After your exercise period, take a tepid shower or bath. Finish with cool or cold water, followed by a brisk rub-down with a coarse towel.

## THE ROPE

Purchase a piece of rope **THREE-QUARTERS** of an **INCH** in diameter and seven feet long. Bind the ends with cord or tape so they will not unravel. At one end of the rope, form a permanent loop large enough to slip easily over and around your shoe and foot. As tying a knot to form the loop makes the rope a bit bulky, it is better to double back the end to form the desired size loop, and bind this end to the main length of rope by stout cord and tape. However, you may use any method you wish. (See Page 27, Fig. 7-A)

After you've prepared your rope—or if you receive one included with the Course—cut off the few extra long hairs or "whiskers" along its length. It will be smoother to handle.

Please note that the rope **MUST** be  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch rope to produce the proper results. Any smaller size is not satisfactory. Once you have fashioned your rope, you will have a piece of apparatus that can be used for a lifetime without any further investment.

## THE NUMBER OF REPETITIONS

There are two methods of performing the following exercises. When you have worked up to the limit of repetitions given for any one exercise, you should do that number for at least four exercise periods. Then you may do one of two things:—

If you wish to gain super strength, start over with six repetitions but this time use more resistance than you did at first. Then work up to the limit number of repetitions, using this stronger resistance. Go back to six repetitions again, increase the resistance even more, and work up to the limit again, etc. Then, once every two weeks, do just seven or eight repetitions on each exercise, and *use every ounce of strength you can muster!* Exert yourself to the *limit*.

If you wish just to keep in top condition and gain above average strength, stay on the limit number of repetitions when you have reached that point. Then, doing that number of repetitions, you may use as much pressure or resistance as you wish.

As stated under "General Rules," if you wish to lose weight, do several more repetitions than the limit given for the exercise, use less resistance, and cut down on your food intake. Also, specialize on the abdominal exercises.

## THE BICEPS

This is the muscle on the front of the upper arm which springs into prominence when the arm is bent at the elbow and the hand is raised toward the shoulder. In common use, it is the muscle you would use if you were to pick up a chair, or a box, or a tray; or in carrying anything in your arms or hands in front of the body. When this muscle is fully developed it adds greatly to the girth of the upper arm. The best exercise to develop the biceps is done by the "Ropercise" method in the following manner:

Stand erect with your left side near a wall. Place your right foot in the loop of the rope. Have the loop well back against the heel. Stand erect with both feet on the floor, and the rope coming up on the *outside* of the knee and leg. Take hold of the rope with the right hand, *palm facing front*, and the loose end of the rope coming out of the hand on the thumb side. Now adjust your grip on the rope so that when you stand erect with arm straight down, the rope will be stretched tightly between your foot and hand. (See Figure 1-A)

Place your left hand on the wall to keep your balance. Take a firm grip on the rope, and keeping the upper arm straight down, bend the arm at the elbow until your hand is as close to the shoulder as possible, pulling hard on the rope. This action will raise the right leg, which should be bent at the knee with the calf perpendicular to the floor. Don't let your foot come back of the line of your knee. It's actually best to have the foot a bit in *front* of the knee, instead of directly underneath. (See Figure 1-B)

At first you will not be able to raise the leg by arm power alone, so aid the arm by lifting up some with the leg, but always resist enough with the leg so that there is a steady pull against the arm during the entire movement, up and down.

This exercise may seem a bit complicated at first, but after a few trials you will be able to perform the movements very naturally. Remember to keep the upper arm as nearly straight down as possible, and just bend the arm at the elbow. Also keep in mind that this exercise is to develop the arm. The leg is used only for the necessary resistance.

Inhale as you raise the arm and leg, and exhale as they are lowered. Start with six repetitions and work up to ten or twelve, adding one repetition every other exercise period. Don't forget to exercise your left arm also, using the left leg as resistance.

After you have done this exercise for several weeks, do the same movements but with the *palm turned down* and thumb towards the thigh, the loose end of the rope coming out of the hand on the little finger side. Both of these exercises also work directly on the forearm, but the latter one more so. When you reach a point where you wish to develop your forearm more fully, specialize on this one. You will find it more difficult to do, but it will develop a wonderful forearm and terrific gripping power.

In the regular biceps exercise (given first, above) be sure to keep the palm of the hand turned UP as the forearm moves up and down. Resist the tendency of the rope to turn the wrist. Figure 1-A should show the palm turned more to the *front*.

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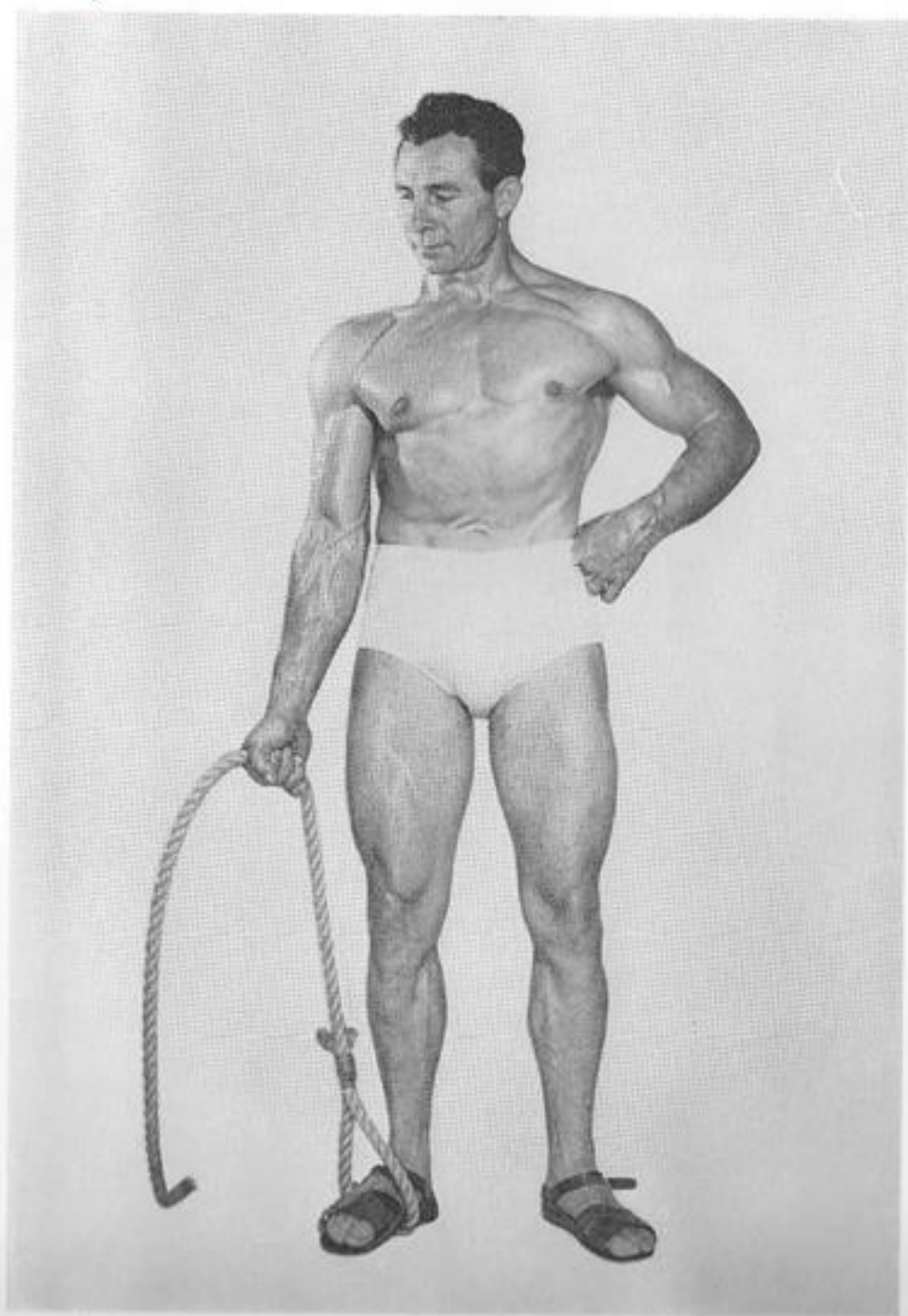


Figure 1-A



# Swingbell



Figure 1-B

## THE TRICEPS

As the name implies, this muscle is made up of three parts and is located on the back of the upper arm. Its function is to straighten out the arm from a bent position. It is the muscle you would use to push anything away from you, or to punch with, as in boxing. When developed, it adds even more to the size of the upper arm than the biceps does. So if you were to develop the biceps and triceps only partially, you would still increase the size of your arm considerably. The best exercise for building the triceps in a hurry is done as follows:

Stand erect with your feet a comfortable distance apart. Grasp the rope close to the loop with your left hand, and nearly to the other end with the right hand, and raise both arms overhead, palms facing front. Now lower the arms, with the rope stretched between the hands, by bending them at the elbows until the upper arms are straight out from the shoulders and pointing directly to the sides, not toward the front, and the forearms are pointing *up* at exactly right angles to the upper arms. Now adjust your grip, with the palms front, so that the rope will be tight in this position. (See Figure 2-A)

Now, this is important: The *upper arms* remain in this position during the entire exercise, and *only the forearms move*, as follows: Begin to pull down and outward with the right forearm until it is on a line with the upper arm at shoulder level and straight out to the side. In other words, straighten the arm. As this movement takes place, the left forearm is pulled back on the upper arm to a position near the neck with the rope passing behind the head. (See Figure 2-B)

Remember to resist the pull with your left arm, *easy* at first, and then very hard after the muscles are accustomed to the exercise. From this second position, (Figure 2-B) with your left hand near the neck and the right arm straight, pull with the left hand and straighten the left arm out to the side, which brings the right hand near the neck. This is done without a long pause between the movements. Stop just long enough to straighten out each arm completely, as this added bit aids greatly in the development of the triceps.

Keep a steady, even pull back and forth, first with the left hand to neck, then right hand to neck, etc. Start with six repetitions and work up to ten or twelve, adding one repetition every other exercise period. Inhale as the right arm straightens, and exhale as the left arm straightens.

Soon you will have a pair of arms that will be the envy and admiration of your friends, and your own pride and joy.

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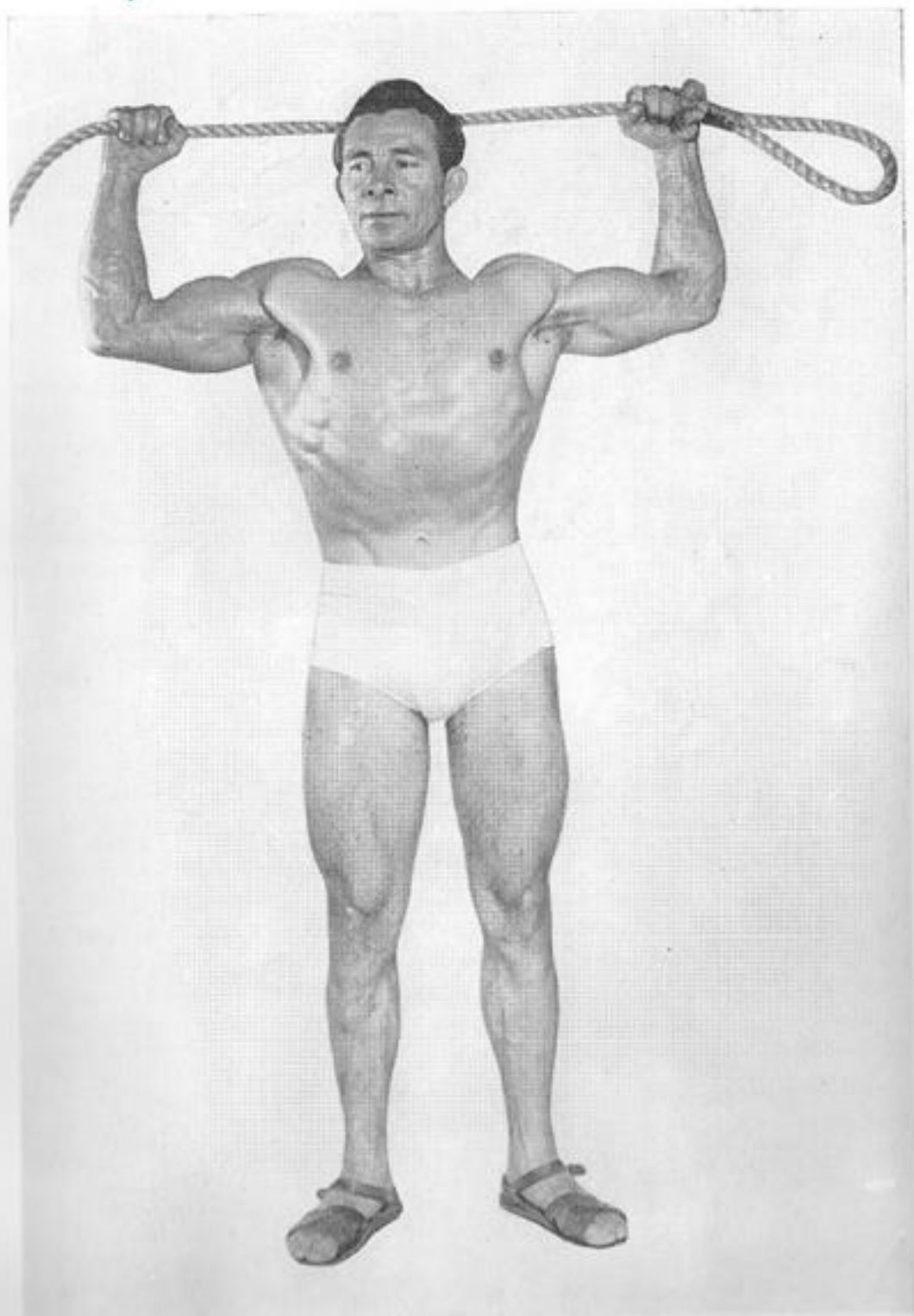


Figure 2-A



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Figure 2-B

## THE LEGS

For the sake of variety we shall omit the rope in the next few exercises. The development of the leg muscles, especially the quadriceps femoris, which is the large muscle group on the front of the thigh, is very important. This group straightens the leg when it is bent at the knee, and is the muscle group involved when you walk up stairs, or jump, or stand up from a sitting position, or when you are engaged in any of a hundred ordinary daily tasks. The best all-around exercise for the development of the thigh is the deep-knee bend, or squat, which is done in this manner:

Stand erect with your feet a comfortable distance apart and the toes pointed out somewhat. Clasp the hands behind the head, and simply bend your knees until you are in a full squat position, keeping your *heels flat* on the floor. Do not rise on the toes. You will have to experiment a bit to find the best position in which to place the feet to enable you to do this movement correctly. If this position seems difficult for you to assume, place a book under each heel until the muscles become stretched a bit. From this full squat position arise immediately to the erect position, straightening the legs completely and locking the knees a moment, at the same time *tensing the thigh muscles strongly*.

Try to keep the back as straight as possible as you go down and up, although at first you may have to lean forward some. Do this exercise slowly enough so you can feel the push in your legs all the way. Do not bounce or jump up and down, but do not remain in the low position, either. Come erect at once.

The breathing is very important in this exercise. While in the erect position, with the hands clasped behind your head, take a deep breath and hold it as you go down and until you start up again, at which time exhale. In other words, fill your lungs first and then squat. Repeat the breathing in this manner during each repetition.

Start with six repetitions and work up to twenty. At the conclusion of this exercise you should be quite breathless, but continue to breathe deeply and walk around slowly. The more breathless you become and the more deeply you breathe, the better and quicker will be the results. This also aids greatly in developing the chest.

After you can do twenty repetitions fairly easily, you can go on to the advanced squat. This exercise requires considerable strength to perform. The legs must be built up first by the regular deep-knee bend. This is an excellent weight gaining exercise also, and of course if your legs or buttocks are fleshy or oversize, it will reduce them in a hurry to firm, solid muscle. The exercise is known as the one-legged squat, and is done as follows:

Place a bench or chair about two feet from a wall, with the back of the chair farthest from the wall. You will have to experiment with this distance from the wall later, as it depends upon the length of your arm. Now, stand erect on the chair with your right foot, and the left leg out slightly to the side and not touching the chair. Place the palm of the left hand against the wall about waist level, and hold the right arm out straight to the front.

# Swingbell

Inhale and go down into the squat position on the right leg, at the same time holding the left leg out a bit to the front and side, and up enough so the left foot does not touch the floor when you are in the full squat position. Keep your balance by the hand against the wall and the extended right arm and lean forward as much as necessary. Come erect at once, exhaling as you do so.

Remember to have the leg you are *not* exercising between yourself and the wall, not on the opposite side. Start with three repetitions only, then squat on the left leg in the same manner. Leave the chair as it is, simply turn the body the opposite way, when exercising the left leg.

After both legs are done, rest a moment and then do ten regular squats on the floor, with both legs at once. When you do this advanced, one-legged squat, do not do any squats before; only the ten following. When you can do ten or twelve repetitions on each leg you will find that you will grow rapidly in size and strength throughout the entire body. Add a repetition whenever you can, and breathe the same as you did in the regular two-legged squat.

If you are exercising just to keep in condition, and don't care about super-development, you may omit the one-legged squat.

## THE CALF

The lower leg is without doubt the most difficult part of the body to build, especially on long-legged men, but it can be developed nicely with persistence and patience. This muscle group is brought into play when you walk or run, or when you rise on your toes. The following exercises are good calf developers.

Place a fairly thick book on the floor about eighteen inches from a wall and place the ball and toes of your bare right foot on the book, with the heel and arch extending over the edge. Face the wall in this position and place both hands lightly against it to aid in keeping your balance. The left leg is held out to the side or rear so the left foot will not touch the floor.

Keeping the right leg perfectly straight and the *knee locked*, lower the body by foot and calf action until the heel touches the floor. Then rise on the toes as high as you can by pushing down firmly on the book with the ball and toes of the foot. Do not rock back and forth, but make the calf action lift the body weight straight up. Then lower the heel to the floor and repeat the entire movement.

Exercise the left leg in the same manner. Start with six repetitions for each leg, and work up to fifteen or twenty, or until you reach your limit, at which time you will feel a burning sensation in the calf. Inhale as you rise, and exhale as you lower the body. This exercise works directly on the gastrocnemius, the large twin-headed muscle on the back of the calf, which gives it most of its bulk.

Next place *both heels* on the edge of the book nearest the wall, with the balls and toes of the feet on the floor. Place your hands against the wall, and locking the knees and keeping the legs straight, raise the front part of the feet as high as possible on the heels, then back to the floor. This action develops the anterior tibial and related muscles on the front and outside of the



# Swingbell

calf which give it a full, well rounded appearance. Inhale as you rise, and exhale as you lower the toes to the floor. Start with six repetitions and work up to 20 or more.

Now stand on the farthest edge of the book again, on the balls and toes of *both feet*, and raise the body up and down on the toes, exactly as you did in the single toe-raise, breathing in and out in the same manner. Do this about ten repetitions to start, and work up to as many as you wish. These three calf exercises should follow each other with scarcely any pause in between. Remember in this, as in all other exercises, to feel the movement all the way.

## THE CHEST

Nearly all of the exercises in this Course help develop the chest, but here is one that spreads the rib box and builds the pectorals, which are the large muscles on each side of the upper front of the chest. If you are overweight, and these muscles are soft and flabby, this exercise will trim them down and make them firm and shapely. Most underweight persons have little development here, and this particular exercise will build these muscles to their fullest. The first exercise, which we shall explain now, is to condition the body for the second, or advanced movement, and is called the push-up, or floor-dip. It is performed as follows:

Lie flat on the floor on your stomach, body out straight, with the toes against the floor. Place the hands *wide apart at shoulder level*, with palms against the floor and elbows pointing up. Keep the body rigid and push up with the arms until they are perfectly straight and you are supporting the body on the palms of your hands and your toes. The body must not sag in the mid-section.

Most persons get little benefit from this exercise because they place the hands *back* too far and *too close* to the body. When you are half-way up, the upper arms should be nearly straight out from the shoulders, and *not* back along the sides. So experiment a bit until you find the right position for your hands. You may be able to do this exercise only one or two repetitions at first, but soon you will gain strength and be able to work up to twelve or more repetitions.

It is very important to inhale *deeply* as you go down, and exhale as you push up. After you can do a dozen repetitions, omit this exercise and substitute the following, more advanced movement, which will build your chest so greatly in such a short time that you will be amazed.

Place two ordinary chairs with the seats facing you, and the same distance apart as your hands were when on the floor. Place a hand on the seat of each chair, and step back with both feet until the body is stretched out straight and rigid, with the toes on the floor. Now do the dip in the same manner as you did the floor-dip, but continue down *past* the level of the hands as far as

# Swingbell

you can, *inhaling very deeply*, and exhaling as you push up. After you have done this exercise for a few days, place a third ordinary chair or stool under the toes, so you are suspended between the three chairs on the hands and toes, and perform the exercise. Remember to keep the body rigid at all times, and to breathe very deeply.

You will add many inches to your chest measurement in a surprisingly short time, and feel full of pep and energy after you have learned this exercise, which is one of the best.

## THE UPPER BACK

Most thin persons have very poor upper back development, with unsightly "wings," where the scapula, or shoulder blades, protrude. Besides looking bad, this condition denotes a weak upper back. The development of the entire back is extremely important, as all the nerves and nerve impulses pass through the back. The largest muscles in the back are the latissimus dorsi, which pull the arms down from an over head position, and back from in front, as in rowing a boat. An excellent exercise for these muscles, which shape the back and give the body that "V-type" appearance when developed, is done by the "Ropercise" method as follows:

Stand erect with the feet a comfortable distance apart, grasp the rope with the right hand near the loop and raise the arm straight over head, palm facing front, and the rope hanging down in front of the body. The loop end should come out of the hand on the little finger side. With the left hand, grasp the rope in a position so that when the left arm is held *straight out* from the *shoulder to the side*, the rope will be tight between the raised right arm and the extended left arm. (See Figure 3.) Now we are ready to start the exercise.

Pull down *to the side* with the raised right arm until it is a bit below shoulder level. This action raises the extended left arm to a straight over-head position and touching the side of the head. The arms are held as rigid and straight as possible during the entire exercise. Now repeat the movement, but pulling down with the left arm, thus raising the right arm. Remember to pull strongly against each arm, though don't use too much pressure *at first*.

Start with six repetitions, and work up to twelve or fifteen, adding one every other exercise period. Inhale as the right arm goes down, and exhale as it rises. This is another brand new exercise, possible only with "Ropercise," and besides building the upper back, greatly increases the chest measurement.

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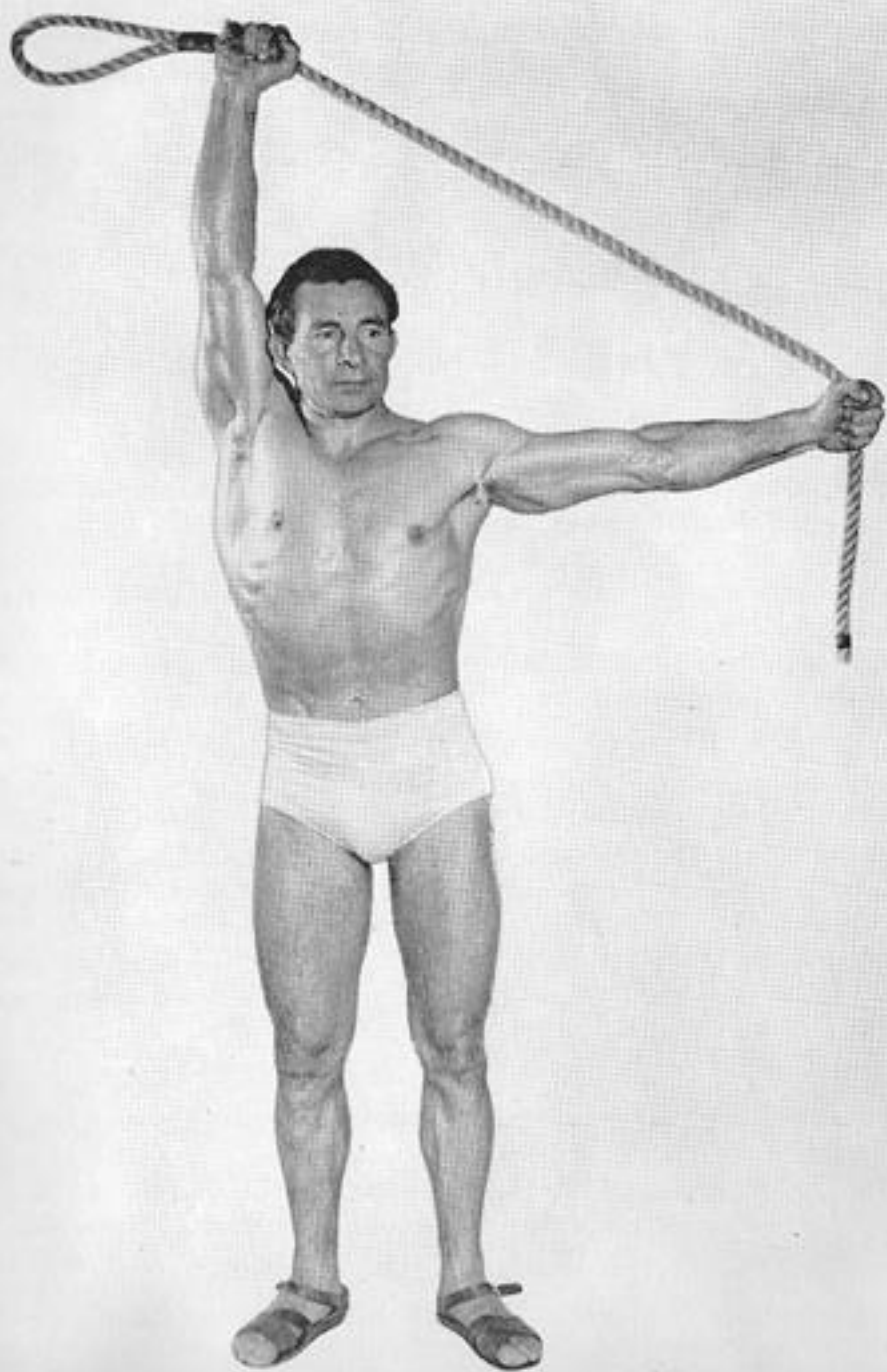


Figure 3



# Swingbell



Figure 4

## Swingbell

And here is another new one, also for the upper back and chest. Stand with the feet a comfortable distance apart and grasp the rope with the right hand near the loop. Extend the arm straight to the *front* at shoulder level, palm down, with the loop end of the rope coming out of the little finger side of the hand. With the left hand, adjust your grip on the rope so that it will be tight when the *left* arm is extended straight out to the *side* at shoulder level. (See Figure 4)

Now, keeping the arms perfectly straight and rigid, pull *sideways* with the right arm until it is extended straight out to the side from the shoulder. This pulls the left arm to a position straight out to the front of the body at shoulder level. Repeat the movement back and forth, and try to keep from turning or twisting the upper body. Make the pull come from the back of the shoulders.

Inhale as the right arm travels back, and exhale as it returns to the front position. Start with six repetitions and work up to twelve or fifteen, adding one every other exercise period. This exercise also works directly on the posterior deltoid, or back section of the shoulder cap muscles, and adds a pleasing development to the shoulders.

After you have performed these two Upper Back exercises for 4 weeks, substitute the Advanced Pull-Down and the Advanced Side-Pull, as explained under "Special and Advanced Exercises."

## PUPIL'S NOTES or RECORD

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines, typical of notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

## THE LOWER BACK

The weakest section of the average man's body is the small of the back. Every time you bend over, for any reason at all, this muscle group is brought into vigorous action. If the average man has to pick up or lift any object just slightly heavy, his back usually aches for days afterward. The following exercise is a bit difficult to learn, but you will be repaid many times over for your efforts in the good benefits received, once it is mastered.

First get a stout stick or cane or an ordinary broom, and place the stick or broom handle through the loop in your rope. Now place the handle on the floor (with the loop encircling it) at right angles to your feet, and stand on the handle with both feet so that the loop is between them. Be sure that the handle is well back toward the heels. The feet should be only six or eight inches apart.

Bring the loose end of the rope up in front of the body and double it back on itself to make a better gripping surface for the hands. Bend over and grasp this doubled part of the rope as though it were one thick rope, with the hands close together and the right hand uppermost, thumbs down and palms to the front. Now lock the knees, *keep the legs perfectly stiff*, and bend over farther from the waist and straight to the front. Adjust your grip so that when you are bent over as far as possible, the rope will be tight when your hands touch the waist or mid-section of the body. The elbows will be bent. (See Figure 5-A.)

To perform the exercise, straighten up to the erect position, pulling from the *small of the back*, and permitting the arms to be pulled straight, while resisting the back pull *strongly* with the arms. (See Figure 5-B.) Remember to pull strongly on the rope when you return to the bent over position, also. The lift *up* is the most important part, and the pull should come from the small of the back. But resist both ways, up and down, keeping a strong, steady pull on the rope at all times.

Inhale as you raise the body, and exhale as you bend over. Don't forget to keep the *legs stiff* at all times during this exercise. Start with six repetitions and work up to twelve, pulling very hard on the rope after you have become accustomed to the exercise. Add one repetition every other exercise period. After you once get the feel of this movement you can concentrate more strongly on the back pull, thus obtaining faster and better development.

Some bodybuilders prefer the following method of performing the same exercise. You may use whichever method you like best. Wrap the *loose* end of the rope around the handle, two or three turns. Adjust the rope so that the *top of the loop* comes up to waist level when you stand erect, with the rope tight. Your bodyweight on the handle will keep the rope from slipping. Grasp the top of the loop in both hands with an overgrip, knuckles to the front and thumbs touching. Perform the exercise exactly the same as the first method. The only difference is the manner in which the rope is used.



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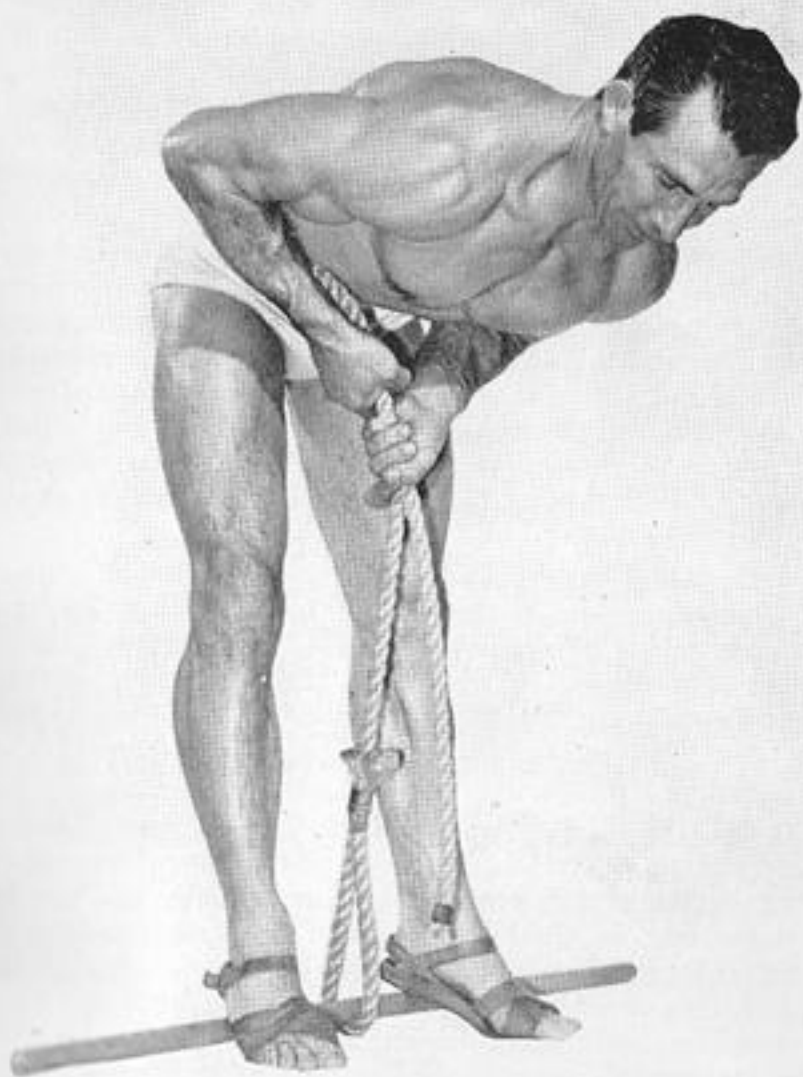


Figure 5-A

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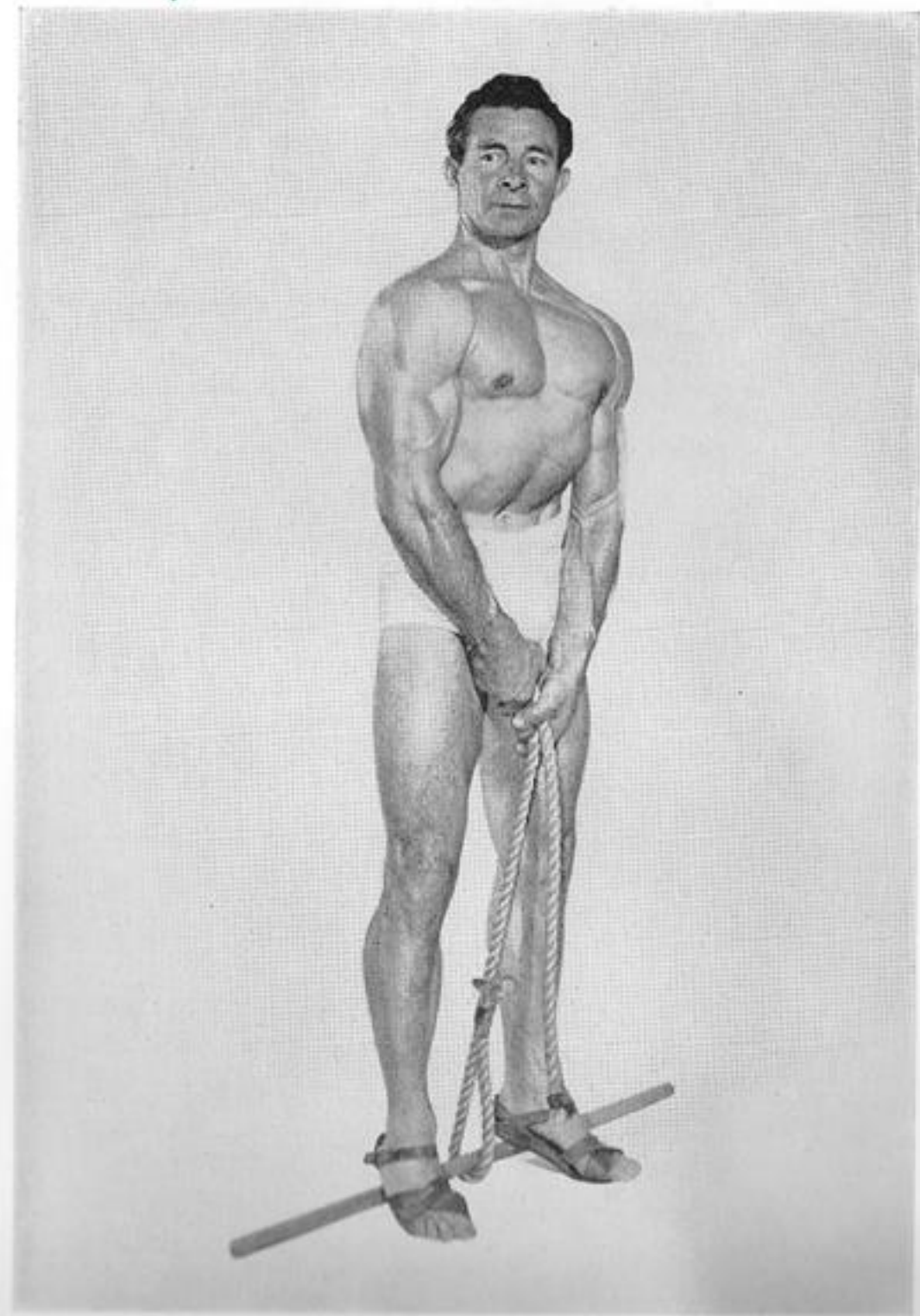


Figure 5-B

## THE SHOULDERS

Broad shoulders have always been envied by men and admired by women. The exercises previously given for the upper back spread the shoulders greatly, as do all the chest developing movements. However, the points of the shoulders, called the deltoids, need a little special attention, and are best developed by the "Ropercise" method as follows:

Stand erect with the feet a comfortable distance apart and grasp the rope with the right hand near the loop, which should be on the little finger side of the hand. Hold the right arm *straight down* along the body, with the palm of the hand turned in toward the thigh. Now adjust the left hand on the rope so that when the left arm is held *straight out* to the *side* at shoulder height, the rope will be tight and running diagonally across the front of the body. The left palm should be turned down, and the long part of the rope passing through the thumb side of the hand. In other words, when the rope enters each hand it will form a right angle. (See Figure 6.)

Holding the rope in this manner throughout the exercise and keeping the arms rigid at all times, raise the right arm straight out to the side and up until it reaches shoulder level. This action pulls the left arm down against the left thigh as it resists the pull of the right arm. Repeat the movement, raising the left arm to shoulder level and bringing the right arm back against the right thigh, keeping an even, steady pull on the rope.

Inhale as you raise the right arm, exhale as it is lowered. Start with six repetitions and work up to fifteen, adding one every other exercise period. This exercise, exclusive with "Ropercise," will build strong, beautifully molded deltoids, or shoulder caps, which give that extra breadth to the shoulders.

### PUPIL'S NOTES or RECORD

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# Swingbell



Figure 6

## END OF PART ONE

The foregoing exercises, as given to this point, conclude the first part of this complete Course. Many pupils, who wish just to keep fit and in top condition, will find this part of the Course sufficient for their needs. However, it will speed your progress if you learn the advanced method of *breathing* in all exercises.

Regardless of which routine you chose, always conclude your exercise period with abdominal exercises.

## THREE ALTERNATE EXERCISES

When the muscles are always exercised in the same groove, they do not develop as rapidly or as fully as possible. If they are jarred loose from their regular routine from time to time, the desired results are much better and faster. For this reason "ROPERCISE" includes three alternate exercises.

The first alternate is called "The Upright Rowing Motion" and takes the place of the first regular exercise, "The Biceps," Figures 1-A and 1-B; the second alternate, called the "One Arm Press," takes the place of "The Triceps," Figures 2-A and 2-B; and the third alternate, the "Side Press," takes the place of the "Shoulders," Figure 6.

After you have done the regular exercises for four weeks, substitute these "alternates" as indicated in the preceding paragraph. You understand, of course, that you continue to perform the remaining exercises just as you have been doing. Do the "alternates" for four weeks, then go back to the original exercises. This time perform the original exercises for just two weeks, then substitute the "alternates" for two weeks. Keep changing back and forth, two weeks at a time. When you get to the point where you really wish to develop your arms and shoulders to their fullest, use *all* of these exercises.

Here is another bit of advice: As individuals vary considerably in their original natural construction, you may need to do some special work on the parts of your body which need it most. Don't specialize on any one part of your body until you have performed these exercises, just as given here, for at least three months. Then, for example, if you think your legs need special attention, do more leg exercises and cut down on the arm movements. You will have to use your own judgment as to what you need most.

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Figure 7-A



## THE FIRST ALTERNATE EXERCISE

### THE UPRIGHT ROWING MOTION

Perform this exercise in place of "The Biceps," Figures 1-A and 1-B. The Upright Rowing Motion develops the entire arm and shoulder muscle group. It helps develop the size and strength of the upper arm by working directly on an inner muscle (the brachialis anticus) which lies between the biceps and the triceps.

Stand with your left side near a wall. Place the right foot in the loop of the rope, keeping the loop well back towards the heel. Stand erect with both feet on the floor, and the rope coming up on the *inside* of the right knee and leg. Grasp the rope with the right hand, palm facing in toward the body, the rope entering the thumb side with the loose end leaving the hand on the little finger side. In other words, an "over" grip. Adjust the position of your hand so when you stand erect with the arm straight down, the rope will be tight between the foot and hand. (See Figure 7-A.) Place your left hand against the wall to aid in keeping your balance.

To perform the exercise, pull straight up with the right hand, keeping the hand in close to the body and traveling up the center line of the body to the chin. When the hand is in this top position, the arm is bent at the elbow and the elbow is held slightly above shoulder height and pointing toward the right. This action raises the leg, which is bent at the knee with the calf perpendicular to the floor. (See Figure 7-B.)

At first you may not be able to raise the leg by arm power alone, so aid the arm by lifting up some with the leg. However, resist enough with the leg so that there is a steady pull against the arm and shoulder during the entire movement, up and down. The pull-up should come from the *shoulder*, not the elbow.

Inhale as you raise the arm and leg, and exhale as they are lowered. Start with six repetitions and work up to ten or twelve, adding one repetition every other exercise period. Remember to exercise the left arm and shoulder also, using the left leg as resistance.

Some bodybuilders prefer to place the *opposite* foot in the loop. For example, when exercising the right arm, place the *left* foot in the loop, for the resistance.

Give each method a thorough test, then use whichever method feels best to you. The exercise is performed exactly the same, either way.

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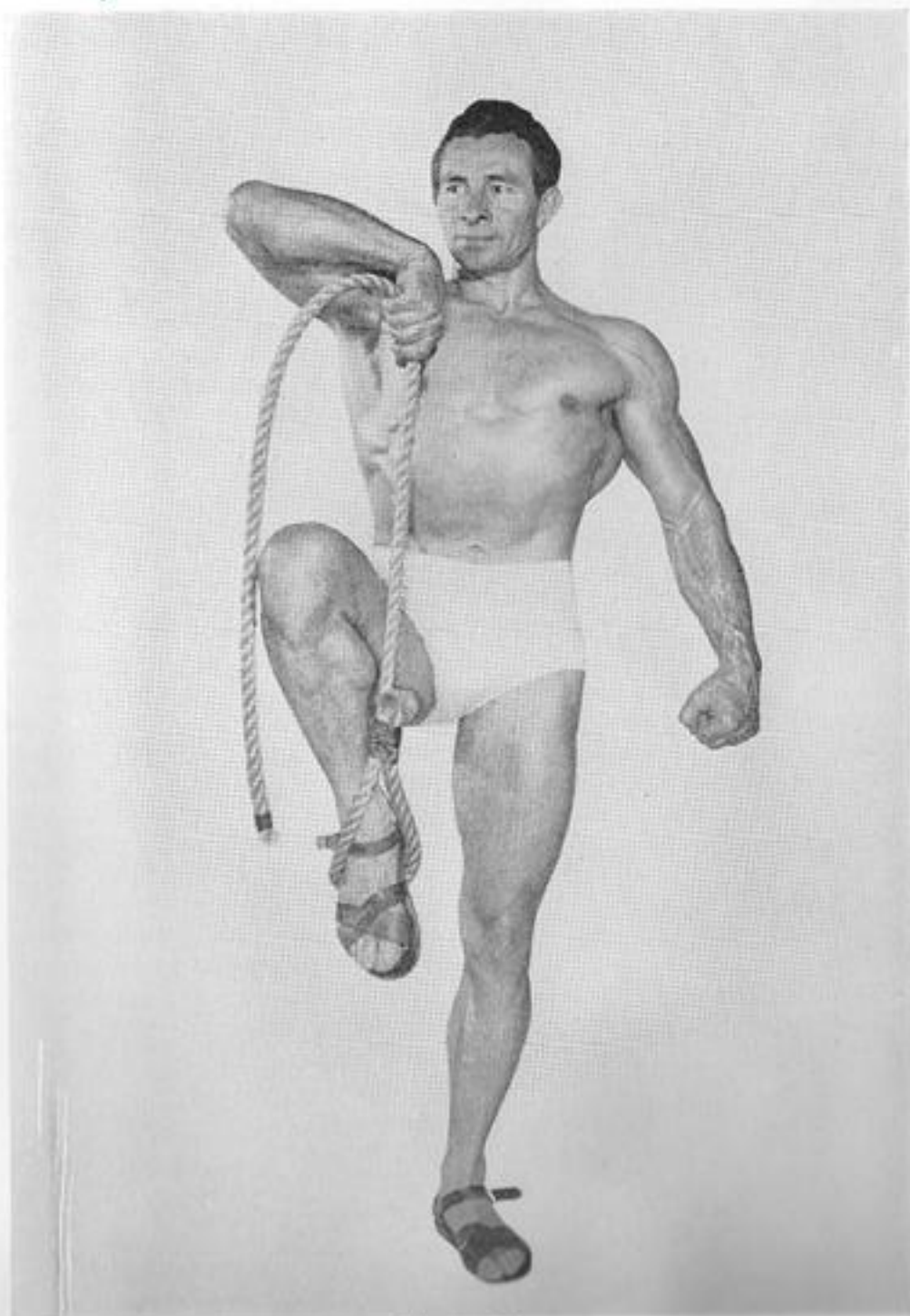


Figure 7-B

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## THE SECOND ALTERNATE EXERCISE

### THE ONE ARM PRESS

Substitute this exercise for "The Triceps," Figures 2-A and 2-B. The Press develops the arm and shoulder from a different angle, and is a wonderful strength builder.

With the rope in the right hand, hold the right arm straight up overhead from the shoulder, with the palm of the hand to the front. The rope is held near the loop end, with the longest end hanging down behind the shoulder and back. The long end comes out of the hand on the thumb side. With the left elbow close to the side, bend the left arm up behind the back and grasp the rope with the palm of the hand toward the rear, thumb up. The back of the hand is against the back of your body. Reach up in back as high as you can, comfortably. (See Figure 8-A.)

Now straighten the left arm straight *down* and to the rear, which will pull the right arm down until the right hand is about shoulder height. The right elbow is bent and the upper arm is close in to the body, but toward the *side* and rear, not to the front. The forearm is perpendicular. (See Figure 8-B.) This is the starting position of the press.

To perform the exercise, push up with the right arm as though you were pushing an object up over head. The push is from the *shoulder*. Straighten the arm completely, locking the elbow. This will pull the left arm up behind the back, as it was when you were adjusting the rope. You may have to pause here a moment and make a final adjustment on your grip. The left arm should be up the back as high as possible when the right arm is *completely* straight. Resist strongly with the left arm as it is pulled up. A steady, even pull, as in all these movements. Then pull down with the left arm until it is straight down at the side and slightly back, as in the starting position. Resist with the right arm as it is pulled down.

Inhale deeply as the right arm goes up, and exhale as it comes down. Start with six repetitions and work up to ten or twelve, adding one repetition every other exercise period. After a short rest, repeat the same exercise with the left arm, using the right arm behind the back as resistance.



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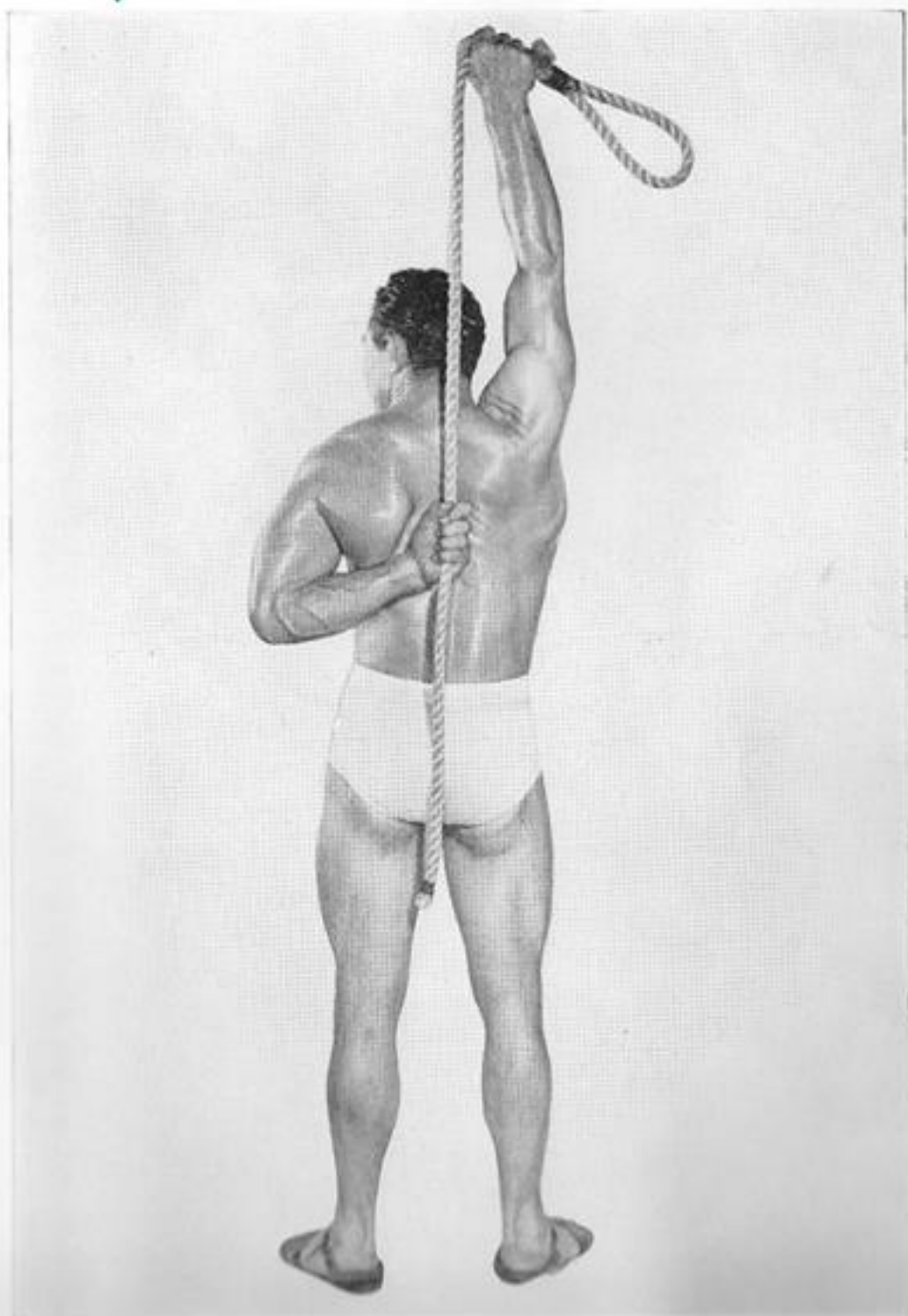


Figure 8-A

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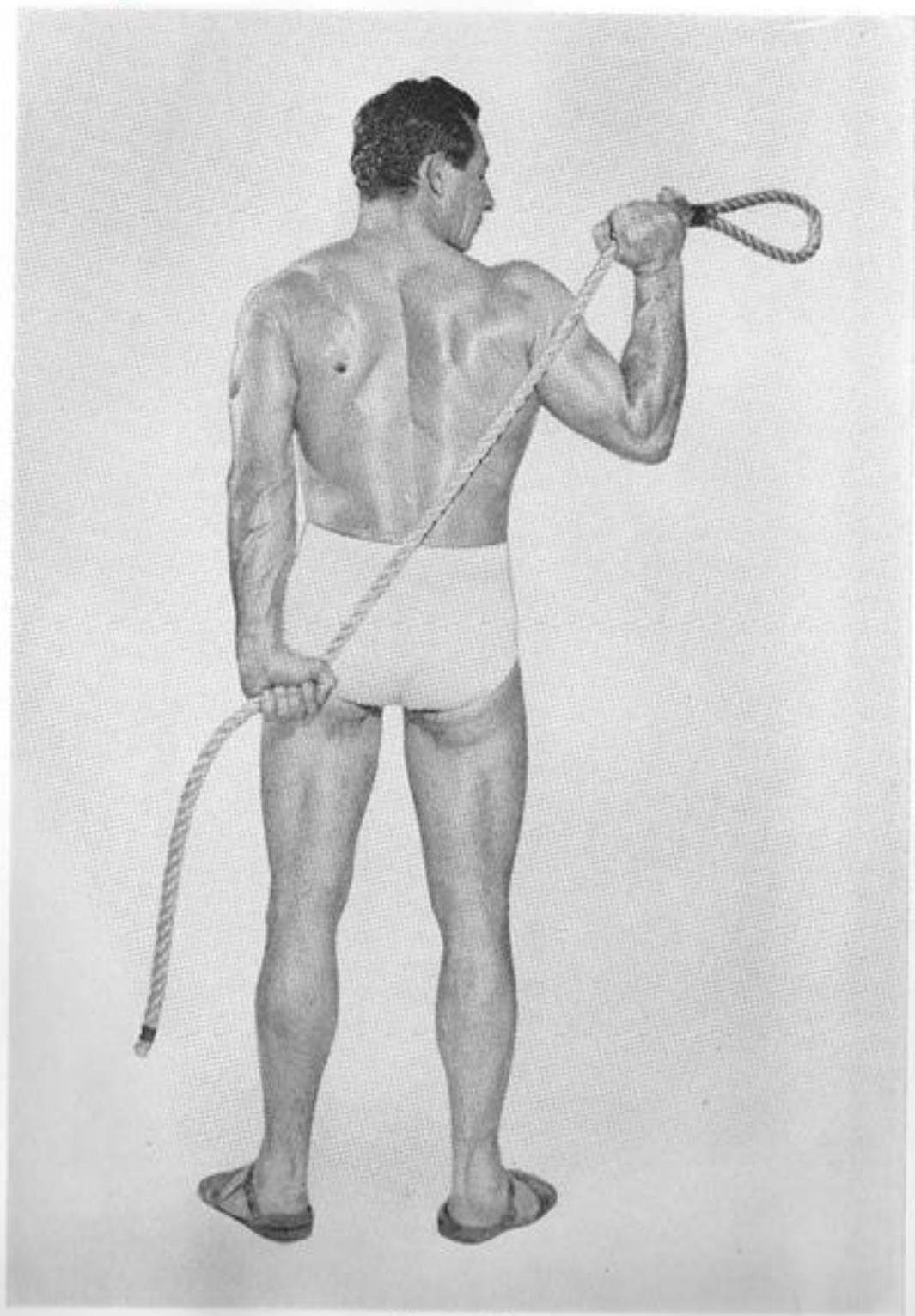


Figure 8-B

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## THE THIRD ALTERNATE EXERCISE

### THE SIDE PRESS

This exercise replaces "The Shoulders," Figure 6. The Side Press develops the deltoids and triceps at the same time, and as with the other "alternates," works on the muscle group from a different angle.

The rope is held horizontally across the front of the chest, just below shoulder height, with the right hand near the loop end. The right elbow is against your side, the arm is bent up at the elbow so that the right hand is just below shoulder height, and the forearm and hand, with thumb up, are *out* to the *right side*, not toward the front.

The long end of the rope leaves the right hand on the thumb side and crosses the front of the body to the left hand. The left arm is held *straight out* to the left at shoulder height, palm to the front, thumb up. The rope enters the left hand on the thumb side. Adjust your grip so that the rope is tight in this position, and you are ready for the exercise. (See Figure 9.)

Push your right arm from the shoulder straight out to the side at shoulder height. This will pull the left arm in with the elbow against your body and forearm pointing to the side, in the same position the right arm was at the start. Press back and forth to the sides, straightening each arm *completely*.

Inhale as the right arm straightens, and exhale as it comes back against the side. Start with six repetitions and add one repetition every other exercise period until you reach twelve.

### PUPIL'S NOTES or RECORD

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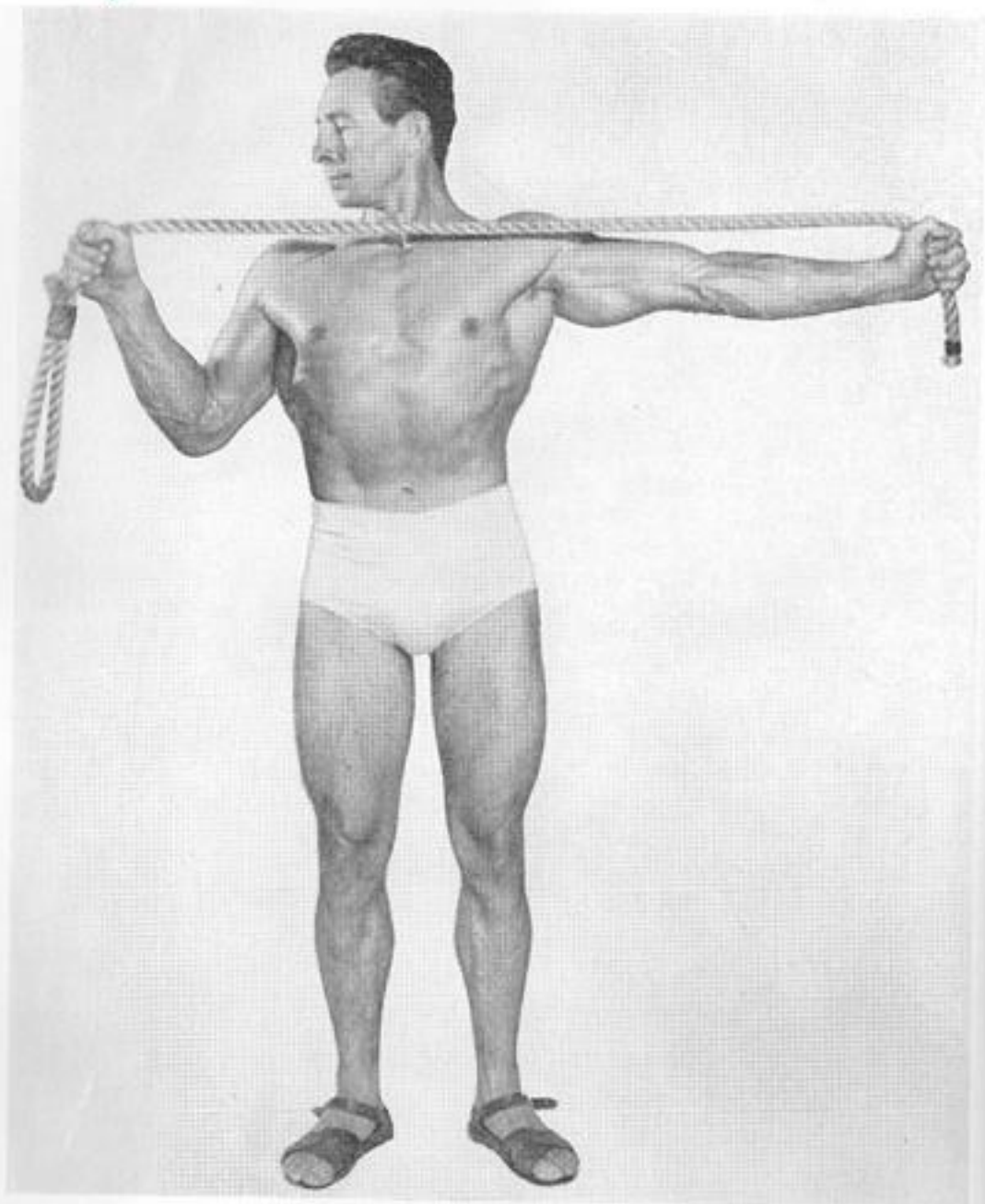


Figure 9

# Swingbell

## SPECIAL AND ADVANCED EXERCISES

Every major muscle group in the body is included in the regular exercise routine presented in this Course. However, for the benefit of those who wish to develop their bodies to the *peak* of physical condition, Billy Van has added these Special Exercises.

### THE FRONT RAISE

This exercise is for the front section of the shoulder muscle, the anterior deltoid. When this muscle is fully developed it adds greatly to the roundness and appearance of the shoulder cap, as well as building a more powerful shoulder. Place your right foot in the loop of the rope, and assume the same position as for "The Biceps," Figure 1-A. There is a very slight, but important difference. The palm of the hand is turned *in* a bit more toward the thigh, so that the thumb is *up*.

To perform the exercise, raise the arm straight up to the *front* to shoulder level. The pull comes from the shoulder. Keep the arm *straight* and *rigid* at all times. This action raises the leg in the same manner as in the biceps exercise, though you may have to extend the lower leg forward a bit. This depends on the length of your arm. Inhale as the arm is raised and exhale as it is lowered. Repeat with the left arm.

### THE SHOULDER SHRUG

This builds the top and back of the shoulders from the neck to the shoulder caps, or deltoids. When this large muscle, the *trapezius*, is developed it imparts a pleasing slope to the shoulders and of course adds to the general bodily strength. Take the same position as in "The Upright Rowing Motion," Figure 7-A, with the over-grip. This time, however, the rope comes up on the *outside* of the knee. Raise the foot about six inches off the floor by bending the knee slightly. The foot should be in a line directly under the hand, not out to the front. With the arm *straight down*, adjust the rope so it is tight in this position. The foot does not touch the floor at any time during the movements.

To perform the exercise, simply raise or shrug the shoulder as high toward your ear as you can. This will raise the leg somewhat, which supplies the resistance. The arm remains *straight down* throughout the exercise. If you wish, you may double the rope for a better grip. This exercise may seem awkward at first, but it will produce a pleasing development. Inhale as you shrug up, and exhale as the shoulder is lowered. Don't forget the other shoulder. After the limbering-up period is over, really put on the pressure. Incidentally, the "Shrug" will also add to the size and shape of the neck.

### THE ADVANCED METHOD OF BREATHING

The original breathing instructions were given first because the exercise movements are easier to *learn* while breathing this way. Now that you have learned the exercises, you can use more pressure or resistance if you breathe as follows:

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As an actual example, take the biceps exercise. After the rope is adjusted for grip position (always try a few movements first, *without resistance*, to adjust your grip) and you are ready to start the exercise, take a *quick*, full breath and *hold* it until the hand reaches the highest point, near the shoulder. At this point, *exhale* and *inhale* QUICKLY. Hold the breath in full lungs as the arm descends, and until it comes back up to the shoulder again. Then *exhale* and *inhale* *quickly* again. Repeat each time like this. In other words, the resistance, both up and down, is always on full lungs. The breathing is done without any pause in the exercise movement.

Breathe this way in all the exercises, with the exception of the abdominal, lower back, chest, and shoulder shrug exercises. These are performed as originally given. You have actually been using this method of breathing while performing the squat or deep-knee bend.

When an exercise involves two arms at once, as the "Pull-Down," "Side-Pull" and others, breathe this way each time *one* arm completes the movement. Don't hold the breath during the time it takes *both* arms to complete the repetition.

Breathe loud and noisily when you exercise.

## THE ADVANCED PULL-DOWN

This is the advanced method of doing the "Upper Back" exercise, Figure 3. This exercise is performed exactly the same in every respect as the original one, except that the arms are *bent* instead of straight. Assume the *first* position for "The Triceps" exercise, Figure 2-A. (This is only to illustrate the position—you do NOT do the triceps exercise.) The upper and lower arms *keep this same right angle* throughout the exercise.

Pull down to the side as far as you can, until the opposite arm touches the side of the head. (If the loop slaps your head, slip it up over your forearm before grasping the rope.) Remember, the arms move *only* at the *shoulder joints*. The movement is performed in exactly the same way as you did the exercise before, when the arms were straight. The only difference is that the arms keep this right-angle, bent position. This bent angle of the arms gives more favorable leverage and permits a much stronger pull. However, it is best to learn the exercise first with the arms straight.

Make the pull come from the sides of your back—just below and slightly behind the armpits.

## THE ADVANCED SIDE-PULL

Here is the advanced method of doing the second "Upper Back" exercise, Figure 4. This one is also done with arms bent at exactly the same angle as in "The Advanced Pull-Down." However, instead of the arms being overhead, they are out to the *front* at shoulder height. (Just as illustrated in Figure 4, except the arms are bent.) The forearms and upper arms form a right angle, with hands and elbows at shoulder height. The hands should grasp the rope about shoulder width apart. Pull back and forth to the sides, just as you did in the original exercise when the arms were straight. The arms keep this



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right-angle, bent position throughout the exercise. The pull comes from the back of the shoulder. Do not twist the upper body.

You may start doing these two advanced exercises after you have performed the regular straight-arm movements for four weeks. Discontinue the original exercises for the upper back and substitute these. (When reference is made to these two exercises in "Superhealth," perform these advanced movements.)

## THE COMPOUND EXERCISE

At some time during his course of training, every bodybuilder has a desire to possess a pair of exceptionally well developed arms. No other single part of the body seems to attract as much attention as the arms, especially on the part of the casual observer. If a man is considered to be above average strength, or makes any claims regarding feats of strength, the first thing most people want to see is the size of his arm.

Actually, arm size or strength has little to do with general bodily strength, and often isn't as essential as development elsewhere in many forms of strength tests. Nevertheless, a fine pair of arms sets off a well-developed physique as nothing else will, and the bodybuilder should not consider his body fully developed until the arms have reached their maximum size and strength.

The "Compound Exercise" will increase arm size and strength at a rate that will surprise you. Do not attempt this exercise until your body has first been generally conditioned. This is not a new exercise, but a method or way of performing three exercises which you already have learned, as follows:

Perform ten repetitions of the "Biceps" exercise, (with each arm) ten of the "Triceps," and ten of the "Upright Rowing Motion," (with each arm) in that exact order. Do not pause long between each exercise, but go through all three as *one* compound exercise. Rest a bit, then *repeat* the entire compound exercise.

The idea is to keep an extra large supply of blood in the area which is being exercised, for as long as possible. If you were to perform three biceps exercises or three triceps exercises in a row, the muscles would tire too quickly. By doing three *different* arm exercises (involving different muscle groups) the same result is obtained. It's hard work, but it will develop magnificent arms.

Some misguided persons, inspired by loose promises and false claims, are under the impression that a beautiful, perfectly proportioned body can be molded in a few weeks. It is quite true that you can *feel* one hundred percent better in a few weeks, and register gains and increased size, (or reduce, as the case may be) but it takes real TIME and EFFORT to develop a truly fine, *outstanding* body. Anyone who tells you otherwise is either trying to "sell" you something, or is not a sincere, competent instructor.

This refers, of course, only to reaching near-perfection in development, and is not meant to discourage the pupil in any way . . . but merely to point

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out the truth—which has so frequently been badly distorted. Physical development is like any other endeavor . . . you can go as far as you *truly* and *honestly* desire. "Wishful thinking" will definitely not produce results.

## THE ADVANCED ABDOMINALS

When you can do fifteen correct repetitions of the regular abdominal exercises, you may progress to this more advanced movement, if you wish, and omit the original exercises. It saves time, as both the upper and lower abdominals are exercised together, and more vigorously.

Lie flat on your back on the floor, legs straight and arms straight out to arm's length beyond your head, with the backs of the hands on the floor. A firm cushion should be under the buttocks. In this exercise, the legs and upper body are both raised at the *same time*, so that you are supported by the buttocks *only*, at the height of the movement. The body is folded in the middle, like a hinge, and the arms (still straight) are brought over to touch the toes of the raised legs. Your body forms a "V" in this top position, with legs and upper body both up. You will have to practice a bit to find the center of balance. The exercise is done fairly fast. Don't try to raise the legs and upper body slowly. The legs remain *straight* and rigid throughout the exercise. Breathe exactly as in the original abdominal exercise.

Here is another, even more advanced exercise for those who wish to bring out the abdominals to their fullest development. This exercise will produce that "wash-board" effect of rippling muscles across the front of the abdomen, which so many bodybuilders desire.

Sit on a stool, or sit sideways on an ordinary chair, so you can bend over backwards without touching the chair back. Place the toes under a heavy piece of furniture, clasp the hands behind the head and bend back and down past the level of the seat, in a full back-bend. Go down as far as you can. A tall man will touch the floor with his head the first time he tries it. Inhale, and sit up, pulling strongly with the legs to help you rise. Exhale as you come erect, and continue on over until the head is between the knees. Try to work up gradually to twenty repetitions.

Sometimes, as a variation, when you are halfway up, remain in that position and circle the trunk or upper body around a few times to the right and then to the left.

This advanced abdominal exercise will give one a feeling of overall strength and power that cannot be equalled by any other single exercise.

## DIMINISHED RESISTANCE

Here is a muscle-building secret known to few, and possible only with "Ropercise." It is not given earlier in the course, as the pupil should first learn the regular exercises thoroughly. If you will take the time to study this principle and really learn how to apply it, you can build muscle and size at a rate that will astound you. "Diminished Resistance" was developed by Billy



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Van especially for bodybuilders who wish to develop their muscles to the limit. Those who use this Course just to keep fit and in top condition may not care to include this principle in their training.

With ordinary methods, only a certain number of repetitions can be performed during an exercise, as the muscle becomes tired. When this "tired point" is reached during a "Ropercise" exercise, you simply *diminish the resistance* (reduce the amount of pull) and *continue* for 5 or 6 more repetitions. These added repetitions bring an extra large supply of blood to the working muscle. This, of course, causes the muscle to grow much more rapidly in size and strength. All other methods must necessarily use a *fixed* resistance, which cannot be changed *during* any exercise.

In actual use, this principle is applied as follows: For example, suppose you are doing the "Triceps" exercise. You have reached the point in your training where you are using full strength in this exercise. When you start the exercise, you pull as hard as you can—back and forth from right to left. Assume that you can do 10 repetitions this way, but you couldn't possibly do *one* more.

When you reach this point, *don't stop* as you would be compelled to do, ordinarily. Simply let up on the "pull," so you are exerting *much less* strength, and do about 5 more repetitions. In this particular example you would do a total of 15 repetitions, therefore. Ten with full strength and five with Diminished Resistance.

For super-strength and size, try this principle on any part of your body you wish to develop exceptionally well.

You can accomplish somewhat similar results with exercises in which the rope is not used. For example, if you are doing the advanced abdominal exercise (seated on a chair) and reach your limit of repetitions—get off the chair and immediately do 5 or 6 more on the floor. In other words, you finish the exercise with 5 movements which use less resistance, and are easier to do.

When using Diminished Resistance with the rope, perform your first movements (the first 8 or 10 repetitions) just as though you knew nothing about this principle. In other words, don't slack up on the pull until you have done the *full number* of repetitions at *full strength*. If you give up too soon, you'll be cheating yourself.

All of the special exercises given in this Course for super-strength and development require the expenditure of much more effort than the regular exercises. To produce an *exceptional* physique, more work is required. However, you will be well rewarded when you reach your goal—a perfectly developed body!



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COMPLETE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Strength - Health  
Gain - Reduce

WELCOME...

to the Ropercise fraternity of happy, satisfied bodybuilders! Here is your Course - the most efficient, scientific system available. By following the simple instructions you can reach any degree of physical perfection you wish. Yes - you are now standing on the threshold of an entirely new life...the door is open!

I know you're really in earnest - truly sincere - about improving your Health, Strength and Appearance. Otherwise, you wouldn't waste your time - or mine - by enrolling for the Course. And so - to make sure you receive the greatest possible benefits - I'm going to give you a few friendly tips.

My interest in you - and your progress - doesn't stop with the sale of this Course. Our partnership is just beginning. Of course, you realize that a little effort is required on your part, too. Naturally, you don't expect me to do it all. But with you and me working together - well, that's a team that's hard to beat!

If you should happen to have a problem - just write, and explain in detail. I'll answer personally - put you on the right track in a jiffy... and keep you there. Then we'll both be pleased with the results you get.

And here's a word about the two week trial privilege: This simply means that after 5 or 6 exercise periods, you can tell by the way your muscles feel - and by the terrific resistance possible with the Rope - that you WILL get excellent results...after you have put in a little training time. You and I both know that huge, massive muscles are not going to pop out all over your body in just 2 weeks! That's impossible, of course - and not the purpose of the trial period.

The average pupil requires time just to get his body in proper condition for the exercises to take effect. Once this stage is reached, the body readily becomes receptive to changes in its structure - and results are surprisingly rapid.

However, many pupils report results almost immediately. It all depends on the individual. But there's one thing for sure - EVERYONE gets sensational results with Ropercise if they stick with it awhile. If you happen to be the type that takes a little longer to get started - don't be the least bit discouraged. Keep training with full confidence, because you will know - definitely and without the slightest doubt - that wonderful, exciting results are bound to come! You also have the double assurance of knowing that Ropercise is the fastest system known.

Above all, please don't merely glance through the Course - and then form your own opinion as to its merits. That's unfair to both yourself

(over, please)

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and Ropercise. The only true test is to actually perform the exercises - exactly as the instructions state.

This is very important: Don't just look at the illustrations and attempt to do the exercises. STUDY your Course and the instructions thoroughly. Furthermore, don't try to read - and understand - the complete instructions for an exercise, all at once. Take the Rope in hand, and read one sentence at a time. Then do that much. Go on to the next sentence - and do that much, etc., until you learn the complete exercise. Follow the same procedure in the exercises which do not use the Rope, also. This way, you can't miss any of the important details. You see, just the way your hand is turned - or the angle your arm is held - makes a world of difference in the results. Be sure to STUDY "Superhealth", too.

And bear in mind that you'll be going through a period of adjustment at first - besides learning the exercises and perhaps experiencing a sore muscle or two. (The soreness will work right out when you repeat the same exercise a couple of times.) Right now is the time - at the very start of your training - that tells whether you have "what it takes" to become a REAL MAN. We call this period "getting over the hump". Once past this point, the going is smooth.

Some of the exercises will seem awkward at first. After a few trials, you'll perform the movements easily and naturally. Then it begins to be fun - you'll really enjoy and look forward to your workouts. Especially when you feel that glow of new life surge through your body - and actually see yourself change...day by day!

Any slight discomfort you might experience, these first few days, will be compensated for a thousand times over - by the magnificent body and glowing, vibrant health you'll win, soon. Please consider that I'm with you in person - right by your side - ready to give you all the extra help you might need.

Physical Development is like any other endeavor - you get out of it just what you put into it. Remember - I'm counting on you to be one of my star pupils! I know you'll make me proud of your progress - and please yourself even more.

Sincerely yours for a Strong, Healthy and Happy future with Ropercise,

*Billy Van*

Billy Van  
Physical Director