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The hardcore Power of Pilates

By [Stuart White](#)
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How many of you are limping over the finish line this season? "Don't worry, you've got all summer to recover," you will be told as you struggle to bend over to tie those worn out old boots.

A summer of "rest", which we all know means a summer of flopping about drinking beer and watching the World Cup, might not be enough to make things right.

This is the time to face up to your persistent niggles and aches so by the time pre-season kicks-off you will be pain-free and have a head start on your teammates.

The answer is Pilates – guaranteed to give you a stronger back, flatter stomach, improved overall body shape and increased flexibility. Don't be so childish, it is not just for girls.

"A growing number of top footballers and rugby players do Pilates as a way of improving co-ordination, mobility, flexibility and technique, as well as for prevention and recovery from injuries," said Claire Roberts of Power of Pilates. She teaches a number of Sunday League footballers, who will remain nameless.

She also says more and more men are now "recognising the benefits of working deep supporting muscles and improving flexibility and mobility, instead of bulking up the big superficial muscles". Guns are no good if they are not firing correctly.

Pilates is slow and controlled exercise, as opposed to blowing out on a football field. It takes a little getting used to, but once converted you will notice a massive difference.

Now I know David Beckham got injured, but before that he claimed to be "in the best shape of his life" since incorporating Pilates into his training routines – the AC Milan team do an hour a day.

Claire, who runs a studio in Earley and classes all over the Reading area, said: "Football demands rapid directional changes, often at near-maximum pace, and an inflexible physique hampers the movement required to do this.

"All Pilates movements are initiated from a strong core to provide stability. Targeting these requirements can aid injury prevention and enhance performance by developing stamina, co-ordination and strength.

"Football managers have long preached the crucial importance of stretching, suppleness and flexibility – the very things that Pilates does best."

Why not give it a try? Visit www.powerofpilates.co.uk or contact claire@powerofpilates.co.uk for more information.

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Bend it like Beckham with Pilates