

GO SERIES

SIMPLIFYING EVERY REP & SET

At Matrix, we leverage deep market research and a spirit of continuous improvement to create innovative fitness equipment, including designs that are easily accessible to everyone. Usually, this means developing low step-on heights for treadmills, step-through designs for indoor cycles and cardio consoles that are easy-to-navigate. But what about strength and circuit training equipment? When we set out to develop Go Series, a collection of strength and circuit training equipment specifically for beginners, our objective was not simply to improve our existing equipment. We wanted to design an entirely new series that was extremely simple and easy-to-use.



WARMING UP

After considering all the feedback we had already gathered from facility owners, trainers, service technicians and actual users, we knew we needed to offer strength training equipment without the barriers of traditional designs. We also knew it needed to be affordable, so virtually any facility could offer ways for beginners to build and tone muscle. Early in the development process, we took a close look at our other strength training series and asked the tough questions. What could be simplified? What could be refined? What was nice to have for experienced strength training enthusiasts, but could get in a beginner's way? Which parts of our designs could be reimagined altogether? We knew we had to focus on the biomechanics, ergonomics and purely mechanical aspects to get down to the essentials. Then and only then could our design engineers set their imaginations free and create the first digital sketches of Go Series.

THE HEAVY LIFTING

Our design engineers started experimenting, and soon they got to the crux of the challenge: how could we create simplified strength training designs that required only the bare minimum of adjustments and still accommodated users of different sizes? We first experimented with elastic band resistance and hydraulic resistance, but these options had too many drawbacks. Elastic bands could recoil quickly causing user injury or machine damage, especially in the hands of a beginner. Hydraulic systems made it hard to dial in the resistance precisely, limiting speed, slowing the return and making repeatability complicated. More importantly, neither of these designs provided the feel of lifting against gravity like traditional strength training equipment and free weights. In the end, we used the same resistance technology as our more advanced selectorized equipment to simulate the feel of fighting against real gravity. This provided an experience more consistent with other strength training equipment. It also meant that as users reached their initial goals, they would be well-prepared and could comfortably progress to the next step in their strength training journey.

As it turned out, the innovations appeared in small but critical design details. Our intent was to maximize comfort and performance, while providing a clean and simple experience so users can focus on the feel, not the machine or its set up.





By developing long, neutral-position grips and extending the seat, we eliminated the need for seat adjustment on most modalities. That meant that whether the user was 150 cm / 59" or 193 cm / 76", they could sit down and comfortably start a workout immediately. With regards to the seated row, we angled the long grips and added multiple foot peg positions, allowing us to eliminate both the chest pad and the seat adjustment, so virtually anyone can sit and go. We used a longer seat again on the biceps curl to eliminate the need for adjustment and created a clear pivot point for optimal elbow alignment and comfort. With these thoughtful ergonomics and simple biomechanics, we created a collection of equipment that made it easy for anyone to sit, get comfortable, start a workout right away and allowed the body to move as it was designed to.

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Yet the innovations didn't stop there. We even discovered ways to streamline service and maintenance, increasing durability and minimizing downtime for users. We used spring-loaded guide rods that can be easily and quickly removed without any tools, and metal shrouds on the weight stacks that are incredibly easy to get on and off.

PUTTING IN OUR REPS

When we knew we had something special, we began to produce samples. Next, we found a wide range of users who could test our prototypes. It was critical that we observe how easily they could get in and out of the equipment. We also wanted to find out if they could start a workout with little to no instruction. No matter their physical differences or limitations of movement, every one of our early users said the equipment was easy-to-operate, comfortable and attractive.

Next, we brought in some of our target customers to try Go Series. We called on their trainers and staff first, since they often work with beginners in their facilities, and collected their feedback. We also reached out to key club partners to see how the series would work as a circuit program. They were thrilled, because with less time needed to adjust the equipment, anyone



could move through the circuit quickly and get a total body workout in less time. When it was clear that these early users shared our enthusiasm for the streamlined designs of Go Series, it was time for the real test. It was time to put Go Series on a real strength training floor and see what actual users would say when interacting with the equipment with no guidance other than a few brightly illustrated instructional placards.

It was at this point that we discovered yet another unexpected benefit of our simplified new designs. The equipment was both compact and lighter than expected, which made transporting it fully assembled to the second floor of the test location far easier than expected. And since all 10 units could fit into a space of just 317.5 cm / 125" x 561.3 cm / 221", creating specialty training zones and arranging it in a circuit was easier too.

To our delight, the initial feedback from members of the test location was phenomenal. The Go Series was particularly popular with beginners, seniors, and deconditioned users, with almost everyone using the equipment effectively without any instruction. Our test location reported that Go Series was

in use all day, every day. In addition to user validation, we put our manufacturing facilities through their paces. We tested and refined the production process, holding ourselves to EN957 and ASTM equipment safety standards. Using advanced manufacturing techniques, we developed a collection of strength training equipment that was as thoroughly vetted and as rigorously tested as anything we've ever created.

THE STRENGTH OF SIMPLICITY

Though we're just at the beginning, the excitement around Go Series is palpable. Our customers at clubs and other facilities are eager to offer users new to strength training a simplified series designed and developed with their unique needs in mind. Go Series also offers practical benefits for the COVID-19 era of fitness, in that it minimizes user touchpoints and is easier to quickly clean than traditional strength and circuit training equipment. Of course, most users won't even notice all of the innovation that went into our new collection of strength training equipment — they'll simply sit and go. And that's the strength of simplicity.