

'This is gymnastics and acrobatics, not erotica'

This sport all about fitness

Lisa Habermann

FOR some it was best described as a vulgar and irresponsible display that exploited women.

But to pole dancing teacher Davina Roper, it's all about fitness.

"Although pole dancing has been initiated from the erotic dancing industry we would like people to understand that what we teach is a fitness-based dance class," Ms Roper said.

The former aerobics instructor was responding to complaints from readers in the *Leader's* Thumbs Up/Down column about her involvement in and performance at the Moonface Festival in Main St, Mornington, on Easter Monday.

"With such young impressionable children and teens around I think it was irresponsible to allow this on

stage in the middle of the street," a resident wrote.

But Ms Roper responded: "If people came and saw what we did, they would realise that it is not 'rude and vulgar' but a fitness-based dance class that helps women with strength, toning and confidence."

Ms Roper started her franchise, Pole Divas, with business partner Tynaiya Boyd after the two enjoyed learning from Kennetta Hutchinson of Pole Divas in Prahran.

She said her routine during the Moonface Festival consisted of acrobatic tricks and jazz dancing - neither of which were erotic or the type of dancing found in strip clubs.

Ms Roper said acrobats from Cirque de Soleil had attended Pole Divas in Prahran to learn more about the acrobatic dancing style. Ms Roper and Ms Boyd set up their enterprise two years ago.



Davina Roper from Pole Divas performs at the Moonface Festival in Mornington.

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