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RAI FAZIO

THE CHAMPION BOXER WHO IS TRANSFORMING GYM-BASED COMBAT WORKOUTS

WRITTEN BY PERSONAL TRAINERS FOR YOU



08>

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'BOXING TRAINING HAS TAUGHT ME NEVER TO GIVE UP!'

Katie Scott speaks to Australian Champion boxer Rai Fazio about how he plans to revolutionise boxing training for group exercisers

If anyone has the right credentials to bring professional boxing training to the group fitness market, then it's champion Rai Fazio. With both his grandfather and father competing as boxers and then working as trainers, Rai was soon thrust into the ring for his first fight at just four years old. This early experience set him up for a glowing national career as he clocked up titles such as the Multiple State Champion, State Golden Gloves Champion and the coveted Australian Champion. 'Pro boxing is the toughest sport in the world both mentally and physically,' Rai admits.

DEVELOPING THE BOXMASTER

Now working as a personal trainer, Rai hasn't forgotten his boxing roots, instead using his athletic past as the inspiration for his current sessions. This in turn has led to him devising his very own piece of equipment – the BoxMaster, a piece of boxing gym equipment that replicates a trainer's hand placement whilst holding focus pads.

'There has been no evolution since the punch bag and there are literally thousands of boxing trainers like my father with shoulder and elbow injuries from holding focus pads,' Rai explains. 'As a PT myself I was starting to encounter

the same injuries plus you are limited to how many people you can train with one set of hands. I researched the market and realised no one had developed a legitimate product, so I set out to.' As well as tackling a missing area in the equipment arena, Rai also emphasises how the BoxMaster can benefit trainers, saying: 'Holding focus pads correctly is an art form and I believe is not something you can learn properly in a quick course. Done incorrectly it endangers both the trainer and the client no matter how big or small the client. Once the PT has read the BoxMaster Instructor Workshop Manual and viewed the Star Trac 'How to Use BoxMaster' footage, we then provide the programme, featuring workout rounds with real boxing combos so the BoxMaster completely eliminates the need for the PT to learn to hold focus pads.'

Although clearly having benefits for trainers, Rai highlights that the advantages to clients, in particular to help with technique, is also huge. 'When they throw a punch, the BoxMaster has a pre-set pad placement with a particular angle so the client's fist lands flush and flat on the target unlike a punch bag where it slides off. These special angles

speed up the learning how to throw a punch from months to minutes. So in their first workout they are jabbing, hooking and upper cutting.'

TAKING BOXMASTER FURTHER

Having already developed a successful product, Rai didn't stop here, instead pushing the BoxMaster further to feature in new Box and Bike sessions. 'I was at a trade show and noticed spinning was the world's most popular group session, but to me was very lower

body and core focused while BoxMaster was very upper body and core focused so I thought up a perfect combination of these two very tough disciplines coming together for a real whole body workout,' he says. 'Anyone at any fitness level or age can do both of these combined workouts. I have members from 10 years old to 75 years old and they all do the same workout. They all love it. It's fun, and they forget they're working out whilst trying to remember numbers and throwing punches.'

This combination is clearly reaping dividends for Rai and his clients. He continues: 'There is nothing like boxing training for your confidence and wellbeing and the benefits of spinning is long proven and speaks for itself. I've looked around all the trade shows and am yet to find a more effective, fun, fat burning workout!'

Defining boxing fitness as 'training like the pros without the blows', Rai's passion for the sport is encompassed in the BoxMaster. So what does Rai love so much about boxing? 'Being able to hit and run away and live to fight another day. The way it makes you feel when you're fighting fit, both mentally and physically. Best high ever.'

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

'Acting was a side hobby / second job for me for a while whilst owning a gym and trying to write and get a film made. I appeared in *Two Fists One Heart*, *Infiltration* and *The Condemned*. As a kid of 10 years old, I was inspired by Sylvester Stallone's *Rocky* and always wanted to write my own film – so I did! It took me exactly 10 years and six months but I got there. Boxing training has taught me never to give up! Along the way I took some acting classes and one thing led to another and I scored a little work along the way.'



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