



**ENGLAND BOXING**  
**COACHING HANDBOOK**  
**LEVEL 2**





2.





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# COURSE OVERVIEW

## ▼ AIM OF THE COURSE

- To develop participants in the 'art and science' of boxing coaching
- To prepare coaches to take a lead role within the England Boxing, boxing club

## ▼ ENGLAND BOXING COACHING STRUCTURE

- Level I – Assist the club coach
- Level II – Take a lead role within the club
- Level III – Assist within regional coaching programmes
- Level IV – Lead within regional coaching programmes and support the national coaching team

## ▼ DURATION

The course is a four day course and all days are programmed to run from 9.00am until 5.00pm

## ▼ ASSESSMENT

### Participants will be assessed on:

- Knowledge of the rules of boxing
- Padwork
- Demonstration of boxing skills
- Knowledge of strength and conditioning activities
- Group coaching skills
- Ability to plan training programmes
- Assessment takes approximately 30 minutes for each participant

Following assessment an 'action plan' should be received which will highlight strength and areas for development. The action plan will confirm if a participant has reached the standard expected to be awarded the level II coaching certificate. Participants that fail to reach the expected standard will receive guidance on what they need to do to address their weaknesses and eventually gain the level II award.



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# COURSE TIMINGS

## ▼ DAY 1

08.30 – 09.00	Arrival and refreshments
09.00 – 09.30	Course introduction
09.30 – 10.30	The role of the level II coach (part 1)
<b>10.30 – 10.45</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
10.45 – 11.15	Warming up (recap)
11.15 – 12.30	Practical coaching session 1: Group coaching principles and coaching of stance, guard and footwork
<b>12.30 – 13.15</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
13.15 – 14.00	Components of fitness
14.00 – 15.00	Practical coaching session 2: Coaching of straight punches and defences
<b>15.00 – 15.15</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
15.15 – 15.45	Effective use of hitting equipment
15.45 – 16.45	Practical session 3: Padwork and cooling down and flexibility
16.45 – 17.00	Summary of the day and discussion

## ▼ DAY 2

08.30 – 09.00:	Arrival and refreshments
09.00 – 10.00:	Practical session 4: Coaching of hooks, uppercuts and defences
10.00 – 10.45:	Running for Conditioning
<b>10.45 – 11.00:</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
11.00 – 11.45:	Practical session 6: Fitness testing
11.45 – 12.30:	Boxer and bout analysis
<b>12.30 – 13.15:</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
13.15 – 14.15:	Planning the training programme part 1
14.15 – 15.00:	Practical session 7: Circuit training
<b>15.00 – 15.15:</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
15.15 – 16.00:	Sparring
16.00 – 16.45:	Practical session 8: Further padwork and cooling down and flexibility
16.45 – 17.00:	Summary of the day and discussion

## ▼ DAY 3

08.30 – 09.00	Arrival and refreshments
09.00 – 09.45	Coaching female athletes
09.45 – 10.45	Practical session 9: Combination punching and phased attacks
<b>10.45 – 11.00</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
11.00 – 11.30	Practical session 10: Core stability
11.30 – 12.30	Equity in coaching and the 'soft skills' of coaching
<b>12.30 – 13.15</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
13.15 – 13.45	Rules and regulations of boxing
13.45 – 14.15	Effective use of shadow boxing and skipping
14.15 – 15.00	Planning the training programme part 2
<b>15.00 – 15.15</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
15.15 – 16.00	Practical session 11: Development of speed, agility and quickness
16.00 – 16.45	Nutrition and weight making
16.45 – 17.00	Summary of the day and discussion

## ▼ DAY 4

08.30 – 09.00	Arrival and refreshments
09.00 – 09.45	Practical session 8: Weight training
09.45 – 10.30	Sports psychology
<b>10.30 – 10.45</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
10.45 – 12.00	Practical session 12: Revision and recap of coaching all boxing skills
<b>12.00 – 12.45</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
12.45 – 17.00	Assessment of participants



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# SECTION 1

## THE ROLE OF THE LEVEL II BOXING COACH

### A big commitment

Successful boxing coaches commit their time and energy to making a difference to the life of the club and its boxers. The rewards are certainly not financial but they can be huge in terms of personal satisfaction.

### Helping others to be the best they can be

Most club boxers will never be champions so if the motivation of the coach is solely to develop Elite performers, it's best to be realistic at the start. Boxing has the potential to be a positively life changing experience regardless of the amount of competitive success achieved. The coach can be a key figure in helping individuals to be the best that they can be and this is particularly true for children and young people. This is a privilege.

Being a boxing coach is about giving young people and adults a safe, rewarding and enjoyable experience which allows them to be the best that they can be. It's about developing good technique, winning and losing gracefully and learning from both experiences, and building character.

## ▼ THE COACH / BOXER RELATIONSHIP

### Putting boxers' welfare first

The boxer/coach relationship is one of the most personal in all of sport. The health and well-being of the boxer comes first and the coach is there to protect the boxer as well as to offer him or her carefully graded challenges to improve.

### Setting appropriate boundaries

The element of risk and shared experience can lead to close bonding between the boxer and the coach and this relationship must be managed to the benefit of the boxer. Safeguarding and protecting children policies and workshops are an important guide to the management of the relationship between boxer and coach.



## ▼ THE INCLUSIVE COACH

### **Working well with others**

The way coaches deal with boxers and other key people such as parents, fellow coaches and administrators, needs to be grounded on clear ethical principles based on honesty, trust and mutual respect.

### **Avoiding favouritism**

The coach will need to avoid 'playing favourites' and concentrating exclusively on the talented. The talented will need special attention but the coach must give ALL members the advice and encouragement they need to reach their potential, which may be beyond what the coach – or they – ever thought possible.

### **Equality of opportunity**

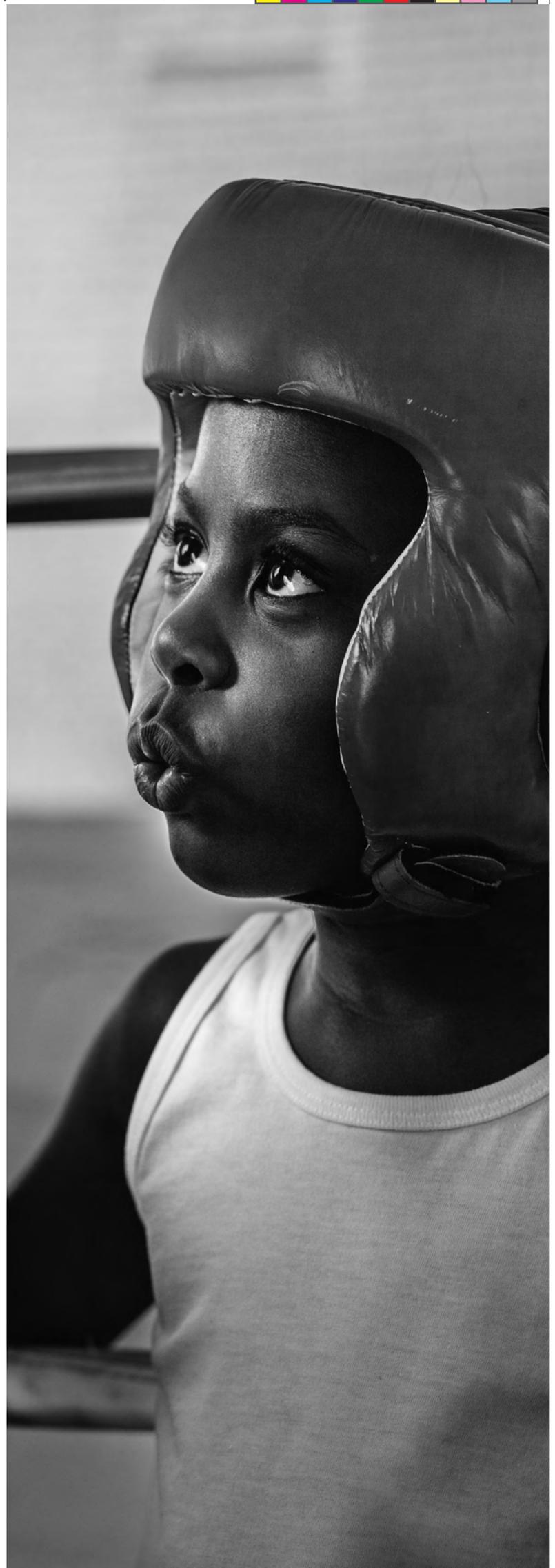
The coach must not discriminate on any basis, including gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality or disability.

### **A sport for all**

The rules of the sport govern who can compete in terms of age and which medical conditions/ disabilities will prevent individuals from competing. **ALL** are entitled to train, and to serve as a coach, official or administrator. The coach must avoid stereotyping and treat everybody as an individual with individual needs.

### **Being a good boxer doesn't necessarily make a good coach**

Many coaches have been successful competitive boxers and want to put something back into the sport as a coach. Not all ex-champions make good coaches, however, and many excellent coaches have had limited competitive careers. The personal qualities which make for success in competition are not necessarily the same as those which make good coaches.



## ▼ DEVELOPING CHARACTER

### **Developing life skills and character**

Boxing has always prided itself on its potential to develop life skills and character. Their development is not automatic and requires a coach with the right skills and personal qualities. To develop effective relationships with his or her boxers the coach must be able to lead by example, listen, look at things from the boxers' point of view, and be approachable.

## ▼ TECHNICAL SKILLS

### **Coaching modern amateur boxing**

Setting relevant practices - the coach should train competitive boxers according to the way that boxing is scored. It's not about developing mini professionals. Updating knowledge and skills - without good technical knowledge and skills, bad habits, movement patterns and strategies are inevitable. Knowledge and skills need updating and it is important that coaches continue to refresh and develop their skills once they are qualified.

### **Wider technical skills**

Successful boxing coaching also depends on appropriate conditioning and the technical knowledge necessary to adapt training techniques to make them relevant to the specific demands of the sport (or 'functionally relevant').

## ▼ PEOPLE SKILLS

### **It's about more than technique and tactics**

Coaching is about working with and developing people and the coach will need to be a leader, a mentor, and at times a shoulder to cry on. At times he or she may even be seen as a parent figure in the case of junior boxers.

### **Maintaining appropriate, professional relationships**

A number of the young people who come to boxing clubs welcome being in an extended family where the coaches are seen as parent figures who may be lacking in real life. This puts a serious responsibility on the coach and this needs to be guided by the governing body's safeguarding children policy. The Club Welfare Officer has a key part to play but every coach shares the responsibility for the safety and security of the boxers. This always comes first.

### **Dealing with winning and losing**

Everybody likes to win but winning and losing are equally part of any competitive sport. Helping the boxer to cope with success and failure is very important.





## ▼ PSYCHOLOGIST AND MOTIVATOR

### **Understanding others**

the coach will need to be able to observe and understand the behaviour of his/her boxers and others, especially opponents. The quality of the analysis and the advice which comes from understanding the personality and motivation of the boxer may make the difference between winning and losing.

### **Creating realistic expectations**

Being a good motivator is about understanding people and making demands which are achievable - with effort! Unrealistic demands are demotivating and can lead to a boxer losing confidence and interest.

### **Planning and organising activities within a session**

The coach will need to be a good planner and organiser so that maximum benefit can be gained by all boxers from all sessions.

### **Working with groups**

Being able to work with groups, especially young beginners, is challenging and there are technical skills in group management which the coach needs to have.

### **Communicator. Getting the message across**

The best advice and guidance is useless unless it's communicated so that the boxer sees the point in what is being taught and can act upon it. An essential part of being a good communicator is being a good listener and observer - communication is two-way after all!

### **Making decisions**

Help boxers to take responsibility

### **Sharing responsibility**

There will be occasions where the coach and boxer will have to sort out a problem in a co-operative way. The boxer is going to have to make the right decisions in the ring, and if he or she is never given the chance to work out solutions it's unlikely that they will adapt successfully under pressure.

### **It's not all up to the coach**

The boxer must follow the coach's instruction and take responsibility for what he or she eats and drinks away from the gym, and the amount and type of conditioning which is done.

### **What if? - A problem solving approach**

Some boxers are capable of working out 'what if' scenarios in the gym with help and guidance from the coach. They will be capable of problem solving and adapting their style and approach in the ring as the contest unfolds. Others will need far more directive coaching since they lack the skills and experience to think through the scenarios with which the contest will present them. The coach can guide and/or direct depending on the circumstances in the gym and the type of person he/she is dealing with.

### **Drawing on past experience**

The more experienced boxer will have the past to guide him or her in making decisions. Where the boxer has had negative past experiences it's the coach's role to help the boxer deal with that, and to build self belief. The boxer and coach must trust each other enough to allow them to communicate their feelings.



## ▼ 'THE COACHING EYE'

### Identifying what really matters

Analysing performances in training and competition to help boxers to further improve skills, tactics and performance is a crucial role of the coach. Identifying the things that will make a big difference may be pretty obvious with beginners and novices but as the boxer becomes more expert and the standard of opposition improves the things which will make a difference may be very subtle – and may be as much mental as physical.

## ▼ A LONG-TERM APPROACH

### There are no short-cuts

It takes 10,000 hours or 10 years of practice to achieve the level of 'expert' performer. Behind every 'genius' or 'natural athlete' there are hours and hours of dedicated practice. There are no short-cuts. Coaches must develop their boxers with a view to what is beneficial for them in the long-term. Training practices that promote short-term pay-offs in terms of results may not be in the best interests of the long-term development of the boxer, and may lead to burnout and loss of interest in the sport.

## ▼ WORKING AS PART OF A COACHING TEAM

### Every coach has a vital role to play

The club may be big enough to be able to have coaches who are also specialists, for example in aspects of conditioning or nutrition. All coaching teams, whether at Elite squad level or within a community club, must work well together as a team led by a head coach who oversees the coaching programme. Every coach has an important role to play in developing the sport and clubs should make the most of the knowledge, skills and experience of all of its coaches.

## ▼ COACHING WITHIN A SMALL LOCAL CLUB

### The most difficult job in boxing!

Smaller clubs often have few coaches and a division of labour into specialisms isn't possible. The coaches need to be competent in all aspects of preparation as well as skilled in getting 'peak' performance out of the boxer in the competition. The small local club is likely to have a majority of young boxers and the coach will need to have knowledge and understanding of the effective coaching of children. The coach at the small local club is in many ways doing the most difficult job in boxing and needs to be able to deal with a range of skills and motivation in any one session.

## ▼ THE LAST WORD

### Challenging and rewarding

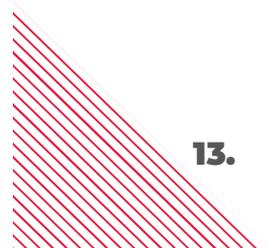
Coaching isn't all about the enjoyable aspects, like working on the pads; the coach is also going to have to do his or her fair share of the boring and dirty jobs around the club, such as cleaning the toilets, sweeping up, and repairing the punchbags. Then there are the hours on the phone and the internet trying to make good matches for the boxers and traveling the country to club shows and championships. All of this becomes worthwhile when the boxers start to fulfil their potential as boxers - and also as people.

## REGISTRATION OF THE LEVEL II COACH

All contact boxing activity must take place within an EB affiliated club and in accordance with the rules and regulations of EB. Coaches that do not register with EB operate outside the governing body's rules and regulations and do so at their own risk.

### To register with England Boxing a coach must:

- Have completed an England Boxing coaching course
- Be in possession of a certificate confirming their attendance at a face to face first aid course (three year validity)
- Be in possession of a certificate confirming their attendance at a face to face Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport/boxing training course (three year validity)
- Be cleared to work with children by England Boxing via a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (three year validity)
- Pay the annual registration fee (£22 in 2018) via [www.englandboxinginsight.com](http://www.englandboxinginsight.com)







## SECTION 2

### COACHING ETHICS

#### Relationships

- As a coach you will be primarily concerned with the well-being, safety, and sporting development of the individual. There must be a balance between the development of performance and the social, emotional, mental and physical needs of the boxer.
- A contact sport such as boxing can lead to a very close relationship between coach and boxer. You are responsible for maintaining appropriate boundaries between a working relationship and friendship in accordance with the governing body's safeguarding children policy.
- The relationship between coach and performer relies heavily on mutual trust and respect. This respect must be earned by both parties.

#### Commitment

- You must display a commitment to the boxers and the club and reliability is essential. The boxer should commit to the training required and the coach must set out clearly what is expected.
- You should clarify in advance with boxers and/or parents the training required to achieve the boxer's goals and you as the coach will provide the necessary expertise and guidance. Expectations should be realistic and progress should be regularly reviewed.

#### Co-operation

- You should communicate and co-operate with other coaches and with sports and associated professions in the best interests of your boxers; for example seeking of educational and career counselling for young performers whose involvement in sport affects their studies.

## Integrity

- You must not encourage performers to violate the rules of boxing and should discourage and condemn such action.
- You must not promote or allow measures that could lead to unfair advantage. You must not adopt practices to enhance performance that might jeopardise the safety and wellbeing of the boxer and must never advocate or condone the use of banned performance enhancing substances.
- You must treat opponents and officials with respect in victory and defeat, and should encourage your performers to do the same.
- You should prepare boxers to respond to success and failure in a dignified and sporting way. Leading by example is an excellent first step.
- You must accept responsibility for the conduct of your performers and discourage inappropriate behaviour in training, competition and away from the sporting arena.
- All NGB's have a code of conduct for coaches that all coaches are expected to follow. This section outlines the ethical standards upon which these are based.
- You must respect the rights, dignity and worth of everybody. You must treat everyone equitably and sensitively, regardless of ability, gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.
- Boxing must be open and welcoming to all who wish to participate in it. EB's Code of Conduct for Coaches and Volunteers can be found in the appendix of this handbook.

## Confidentiality

- Coaches gather a great deal of personal information about boxers such as medical conditions and contact details and this should be treated confidentially.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY DOES NOT PREVENT DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO THOSE WITH A RIGHT TO KNOW, FOR EXAMPLE:**

1. For evaluation for competitive selection
2. In pursuit of disciplinary action within the sport
3. For legal and medical reasons
4. Making recommendations to parents/family where the health and safety of performers might be at stake
5. In pursuit of action to protect children from abuse

## Abuse of privilege

- The coach is privileged to have regular contact with the boxers and on occasion may travel and share accommodation with them. You must consistently display high personal and professional standards and abide by the sport's code of conduct and safeguarding children policy.





### Positive images

- Personal appearance is a matter of individual taste but you have an obligation to display a positive image of health, cleanliness and professionalism, and to observe the requirements for personal dress set out in the Rules and Regulations of Boxing.
- You should never smoke while coaching and should not drink alcohol before coaching as it may affect your competence to coach, compromise the safety of the performers or obviously indicate you have been drinking.

### Safety

- Boxing coaches have a responsibility to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and well-being of their boxers. All reasonable steps should be taken to establish a safe environment and in keeping with the recognised practices of the sport as determined by EB.
- Activity undertaken should be suitable for the age, physical and emotional maturity, experience and ability of the performers within a participant-centred approach.
- Coaches have a duty to protect children from harm and abuse.
- The boxers should have been suitably prepared for the activity and made aware of their personal responsibilities in terms of safety.
- You should ensure you have adequate insurance to cover all aspects of your coaching and should always operate within EB's guidelines.

### Competence

- You must coach in accordance with what your qualification as a level II coach allows you to do.
- You must be able to recognise and accept when it is in the best interests of boxers to refer them to other coaches/agencies. It is your responsibility, as far as possible, to verify the competence and integrity of any other person to whom you refer a boxer.
- You should welcome feedback on your coaching by colleagues and be able to account to performers, EB and colleagues for what you do and why.
- You have a responsibility to yourself and your performers to maintain and keep your own skills and knowledge up to date. You should recognise when your own expertise is lacking and have a responsibility to seek support and guidance.

### Code of Conduct

EB's code of conduct is reproduced on the next two pages; reflect on your own coaching practice as you read it through.



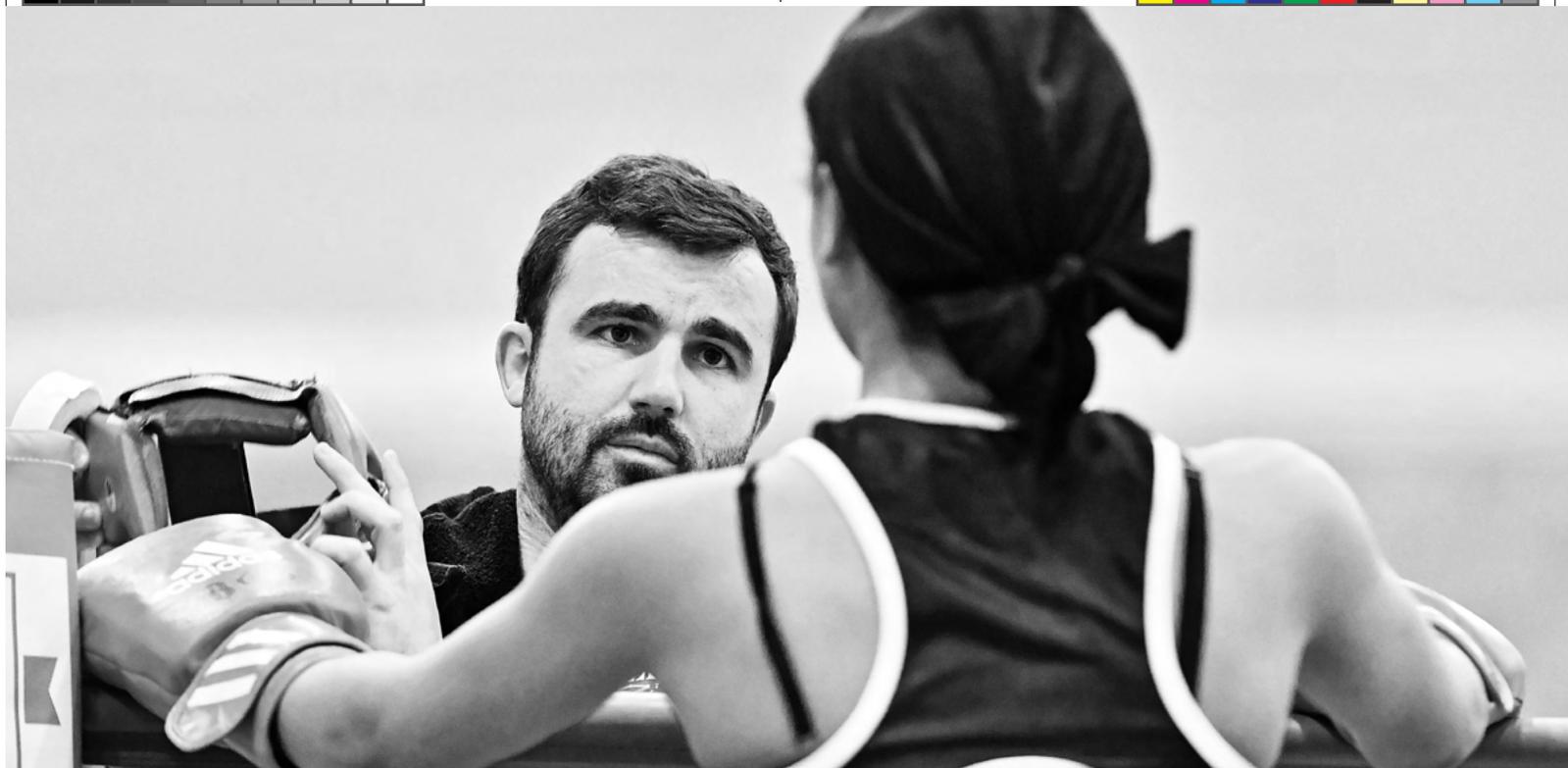


# CODE OF CONDUCT

## COACHES & VOLUNTEERS

- Always work in an open environment for example: avoiding secretive or unobserved situations and encourage open communication;
- Always ensure that you do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with a child[ren] away from others;
- Always challenge injustice;
- Always treat children and young people equally, affording respect and dignity;
- Always put the welfare of each child or young person first, before winning or achieving goals;
- Always recognise the developmental capacity of the child and do not push them against their will or train them excessively;
- Always maintain a safe and appropriate distance with athletes. For example, it is not appropriate for adults to have an intimate relationship with a child or young person or to share a room with them, unless in cases of emergency where you must enter their room always have another adult present, leaving the room door open;
- Always seek to build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and young people to share in the decision making process;
- Always make sport fun, enjoyable and promote fair play;
- Always ensure that if any form of manual physical support is required, it is provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the Coach Education Programme. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when a child or young person is constantly moving in training. Where physical contact is practiced in sport on a frequent basis [for instance gymnasium exercises] the parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained;
- Always keep up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport;
- Always involve parents and carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. However even in those circumstances, never allow a single adult to enter alone;
- When supervising children and young people in changing rooms, always work in pairs and in these circumstances never supervise children and young people of the opposite gender;
- Always ensure that you have details of a child's medical needs if any, whilst the child or young person is under your supervision [see Parental Consent Form – A linked Document];
- Always remember that you are a 'role model' and never condone the use of any performance enhancing drugs;
- Always ensure that appropriate seat restraints are used when travelling with children and young people;
- Never invite a child or young person to your home without a parent, guardian or appropriate adult present;
- Always ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur;
- Always ensure that at tournaments or residential events, adults do not invite children into their rooms;
- Always be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol or use foul or inappropriate language in the company of children and young people;
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- Always secure parental consent in writing to act in *loco parentis*, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and or other medical treatment;
- Always keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given;
- Always request written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars, which should be done by at least two adults;
- At tournaments, dissent towards officials/results will not be tolerated;
- Coaches should at all times be respectful to officials – if legitimate complaint is justified it should be aired in a dignified manner away from public gaze and in the absence of athletes.





## ▼ COACH / ATHLETE RATIOS

**The following are the recommended ratios**

- For groups including children under 11 years of age : 1:8
- For groups comprising of children over 10 years of age : 1:10
- Seniors: 1:20

There must be at least two adults present at any one time for groups of four or more. For mixed gender groups of any size, there must be at least one male and one female present

## ▼ PRACTICES NEVER TO BE SANCTIONED

**The following should never be sanctioned. YOU SHOULD NEVER:**

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay with a child or young person;
- Share a room with a child or young person;
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person, even in fun;
- Upset or reduce a child or young person to tears as a form of control;
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child or young person;
- Do things of a personal nature for children, young persons whether disabled or not or whether an adult or not, that they can do for themselves;

## ▼ REMEMBER! THE ETHICAL BOXING COACH...

- Has the safety and welfare of the boxer as the number one goal;
- Is committed to the coaching role and is reliable and consistent;
- Follows EB's code of conduct and child protection policy;
- Is accepting of a wide range of social and personal backgrounds;
- Doesn't have favourites and is welcoming of a wide range of ability;
- Works well with other coaches and respects others' opinions;
- Matches boxers appropriately; doesn't over or under match;
- Is honest about the record and the standard of performance when matching the boxer;
- Ensures dangerous weight making practices are avoided;
- Ensures that boxers (and their parents) are given proper advice, for example on nutrition and hydration;
- Ensures that training programmes are appropriate to the individual and are participant-centred;
- Uses praise and criticism appropriately and avoids humiliating boxers, especially in public;
- Does not use physical activity as a punishment;
- Respects the opponent, the opponent's coach and officials, and teaches dignity in victory and defeat;
- Keeps up to date with training/coaching knowledge and practice and accepts expert advice in areas where expertise is lacking;
- Reviews his or her performance and is realistic and honest in self appraisal.



**NSPCC**

**THE NSPCC ADVISE:**

## **POSITION OF TRUST**

This is a legal term that refers to a position of authority over another person or within an organisation. These guidelines are intended to guard against situations where a person takes advantage of their position of authority with inappropriate behaviour.

### **ALL ENGLAND BOXING REGISTERED COACHES NEED TO BE AWARE THAT THEY ARE IN A POSITION OF TRUST!**

- Any sexual activity between adults in sport (whatever the specific role) and young people is inappropriate, usually illegal and will lead to disciplinary action and probably police involvement.
- All volunteers in boxing should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with young people. Intimate or sexual relationships between volunteers and pupils will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Any sexual activity between an adult volunteer and anyone under 18 years of age may be a criminal offence.
- All volunteers should ensure that their relationships with young club members are appropriate to the age and gender of the member, and take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when volunteers are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.
- From time to time volunteers may encounter young people who display attention-seeking behaviour, or profess to be attracted to them. Volunteers should aim to deal with those situations sensitively and appropriately, but ensure that their behaviour cannot be misinterpreted. In these circumstances, the volunteer should also ensure that the club welfare officer is aware of the situation







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## SECTION 3

### SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS IN BOXING

This section is included for completeness. The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is covered in detail on the EB Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Boxing CPD course

Please note that throughout this sub-section, statements referring to children also relate to young people and vulnerable adults. In this context a child is considered to be everyone under the age of 18.

#### **Good practice**

The preceding sections identified ways to ensure coaching practice is good ethical practice and there are very many examples of good practice throughout boxing coaching and boxing clubs. However there are sadly some examples of poor practice where coaches fail to meet the standards set and sometimes this poor practice can slip into abuse, either intentionally or unintentionally.

#### **Everyone's responsibility**

While most children enjoy their sport in safety, some are at risk of abuse from individuals who target sport to gain access to children, or who use their position in sport to develop inappropriate relationships with children. There is a need to prevent inappropriate people from accessing sport and to create a culture in which abuse cannot be allowed to happen and where concerns are raised and acted upon.

Adults working in sport are in a unique position to identify and act on concerns for children that arise outside the sporting environment. Every coach has a responsibility to act on any concerns that they have regarding a child. Coaches have a moral and legal requirement to protect children and should comply with the good practice recommendations to protect themselves from any potential allegations.



## ▼ TYPES OF ABUSE

There are five main types of abuse:

### PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Where adults or other young people physically hurt or injure children, by for example hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating or drowning.
- Examples of physical abuse in sport include when children are forced into training and competition that exceeds the capacity of their immature and growing body; or where children are given drugs to enhance performance.

### SEXUAL ABUSE

- When adults (male or female) or other young people use children to meet their own sexual needs.
- This could include: full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, fondling, showing children pornography (books, videos, pictures) or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner.
- In sport, coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed.
- The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing. Isolated 1-1 contact, for example while away at competitions, provides an environment within which sexual abuse may occur and the coach may 'groom' the athlete to gain such contact.

### EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- The persistent emotional ill treatment of children, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on their emotional development.
- It may involve communicating to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in terms of meeting the needs of another person.
- It may feature expectations of children that are not appropriate to their age or development.
- It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make them nervous and withdrawn.
- Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always cause some emotional abuse.
- Examples of emotional abuse in sport include subjecting children to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm or bullying. Putting them under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.





## NEGLECT

- Is when adults fail to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.
- For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Refusal to give children love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect. Examples of neglect in sport could include failing to ensure that children are safe, exposing them to undue cold or heat or failing to protect them from unnecessary risk of injury.

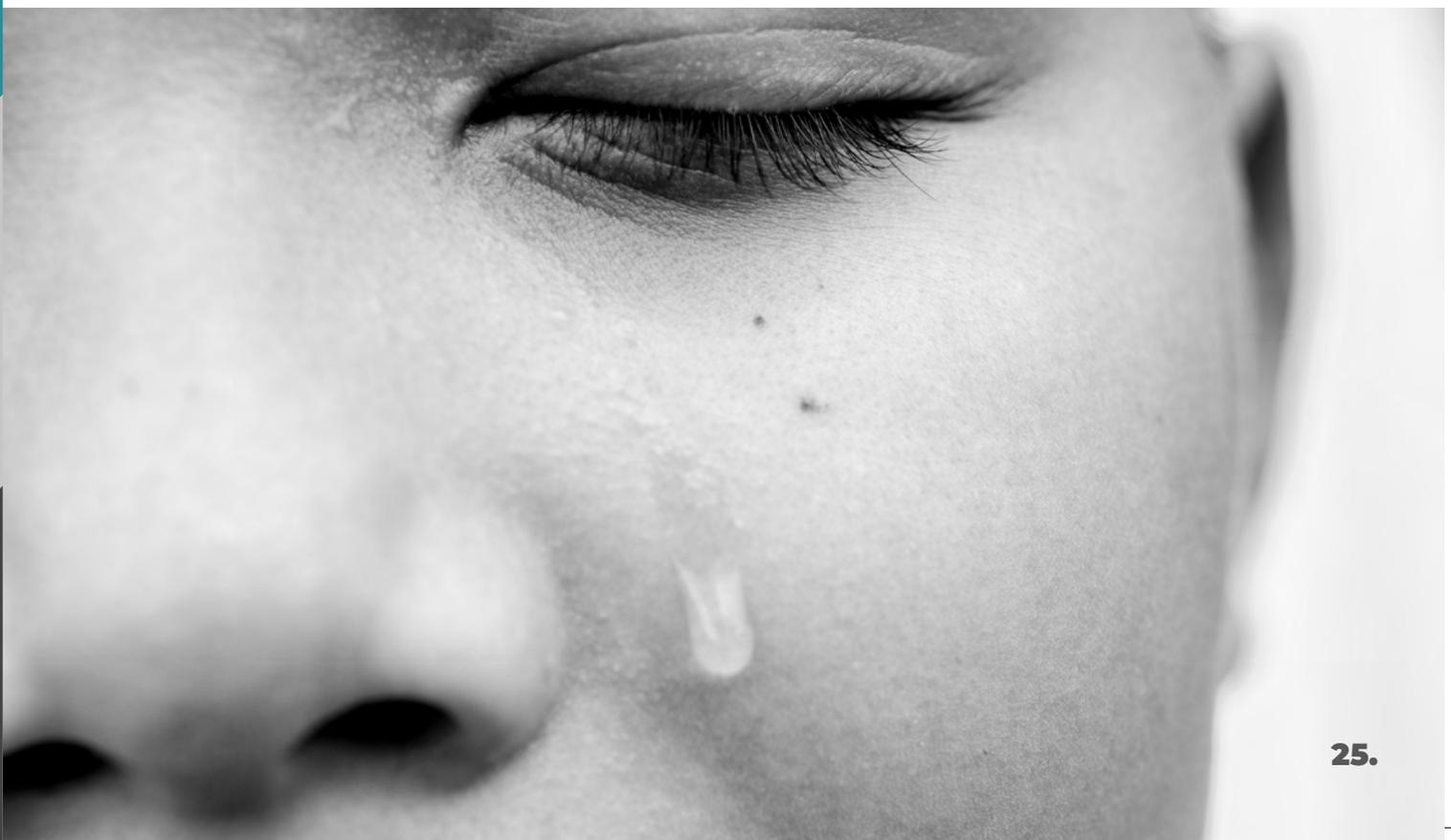
## BULLYING

- Is another form of child abuse that can be carried out by adults (including coaches) but more frequently by other children.
- It can include racism and other types of discrimination and you need to recognise the impact and extent of bullying and discrimination in the lives of young people.
- Bullying can be psychological, verbal or physical in nature.
- It involves an imbalance of power in which the powerful attack the powerless, and occurs over time rather than being a single act.
- Examples of bullying behaviour include: name calling, insults and verbal abuse, deliberately embarrassing or humiliating a child, making a child feel different or like an outsider, lying to someone about being physically assaulted or threatened with violence, deliberately ignoring someone.
- Recent NSPCC research has shown that in sport, peers are the most common perpetrators of all forms of harm, with coaches sometimes failing to challenge it effectively.

**IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MONITOR AND ADDRESS BULLYING AND OTHER INAPPROPRIATE PEER BEHAVIOUR.**

## ▼ PARTICULAR RISKS WITHIN BOXING

- All coaches need to be aware of particular risks in boxing and their responsibilities
- A coach hitting or bullying a child. (When developing boxing skills, very low intensity punching using coach spar pads is considered an acceptable part of the sport).
- The nature and intensity of training exceeding the capacity of the child's body.
- Weight control involving dehydration and malnutrition.
- Advocating or allowing the use of performance enhancing drugs.
- Excessive sparring or sparring with others that are older, of a higher standard or heavier unless very closely controlled and appropriately conditioned.
- Exposing the child to sexual behaviour/attitudes/discussions or pornography.
- Subjecting a child to direct sexual advances by members, coaches or others.
- Exposing a child to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform.
- Subjecting a child to ridicule or punishment following poor performance or bribing him or her by offering excessive reward for winning.





## ▼ COMMON SIGNS OF ABUSE

You need to recognise signs of possible abuse but remember it is not your responsibility to determine whether or not it is abuse; it is your duty to report a concern. Only safeguarding professionals can determine whether or not abuse is taking place and this is complicated because every child is unique so behavioural signs of abuse will vary from child to child.

However, there are some behaviours (or combinations of behaviours) that are often seen in children and young people who have been or are being abused:

- The child appears distrustful of a particular adult, or a parent or a coach with whom you would expect there to be a close relationship.
- He or she has unexplained injuries such as bruising, bites or burns; particularly if these are on a part of the body where you would not expect them.
- He or she has an injury which is not explained satisfactorily or properly treated.
- A deterioration in physical appearance or a rapid weight gain or loss.
- Pains, itching, bruising or bleeding in or near the genital area.
- A change in the child's general behaviour, for example they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn or unexpectedly aggressive. Such changes can be sudden or gradual.
- If he or she refuses to remove clothing for normal activities or wants to keep covered up in warm weather.
- If he or she shows inappropriate sexual awareness or behaviour for chronological age.
- Some disabled children may not be able to communicate verbally about abuse that they may be experiencing or have witnessed. It is therefore important to observe these children for signs other than 'telling'.

These signs should be seen as a **possible indication** of abuse and not as confirmation. Changes in a child's behaviour can be the result of a wide range of factors. Even visible signs such as bruising or other injuries cannot be taken as proof of abuse. You have neither the expertise nor the professional responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, however, if you are concerned about a child or young person **there is a responsibility to act** on those concerns.





## ▼ LISTENING TO AND RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

Coaches and other sports staff are in a position of trust and influence with children and young people and are ideally placed to recognise if a child is being abused, whether during sports activities, at home or in the community.

A child or young person may also try to tell you directly about abuse. It is very important to listen carefully and respond sensitively. Failing to respond to concerns or responding in contravention to EB guidelines could have serious implications for the future handling of a case.

### The basic procedure for dealing with concerns is as follows:

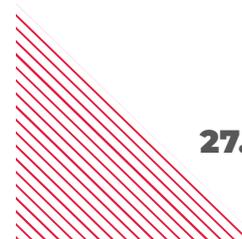
- Listen/observe.
- Record what was said or what you observed (evidence not opinion).
- Report your concern to Child Welfare Officer in your club.
- Follow EB policy and procedures ([www.englandboxing.org](http://www.englandboxing.org)).
- If children try to talk to you about something that is worrying them, it is important to listen carefully and respond sensitively using the guidance below:

## ▼ DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE BY A CHILD

- If children tell you about abuse they are experiencing, listen carefully to what they tell you.
- Don't ask direct questions and avoid 'Who?' 'What?' 'When?' 'Where?'
- Reassure the child and encourage him or her to talk: 'Do you want to tell me about this?' But do not pressurise the child.
- Keep calm and even if you find what they are saying difficult or painful, keep listening.
- Be honest with them about what you can and cannot do. Tell them you are not able to keep what they have told you secret and that you will try to find them the help they need.
- When they have finished, make a detailed note of what they have said, using an incident record form if possible.
- Report what was said in the child's own words and not an interpretation of them.
- As soon as possible, pass the information to the designated welfare officer or someone in a position of authority within your club.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Do not contact or confront the alleged abuser.
- Find someone you trust to talk to about the situation or to support you but remember not to name or identify those involved in the allegations.
- You can call the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- If you have serious concerns about the immediate safety of the child contact the Police or Social Services. Record the name of the person you spoke to and tell your designated welfare officer what you have done.

## REMEMBER

- You must abide by EB's Child Protection Policy at all times
- Every coach has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- By following good practice guidelines to protect children, you will also be protecting yourself
- Abuse can take different forms and you should be able to recognise common signs of possible abuse. Remember that peers are the most common perpetrators of all forms of harm and you must challenge this behaviour
- You must avoid any practices that could be considered to be poor or abusive practice
- If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child and/or the behaviour of an adult within boxing, you have a duty to act on those concerns by reporting them in accordance with the EB's Child Protection Policy and Procedures







# SECTION 4

## THE CORNERSTONES OF QUALITY COACHING

### 1 SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE

Coaches must place the safety, health and welfare of the boxers before anything else;

**The six key areas are:**

- Safe coaching
- Hand protection
- Coaching ethics
- Safeguarding
- Managing behaviour
- Nutrition, hydration and weight making

### 2 PARTICIPANT-CENTRED APPROACH

Where coaches recognise the unique nature of each individual and adapt their coaching accordingly; this is where the needs of the individual are placed above those of the club or the aspirations of parents or coaches.

**The eight key areas are:**

- Fun
- Rapport
- Welcoming environment
- Equity
- Coaching styles
- Coaching children
- Performance and recreational pathways
- Tailoring training to meet the needs of female athletes

### 3 TRAINING AND COMPETITION

Effective boxing coaches need a good grasp of technical skills underpinning movement, punching and defence, competition, conditioning and sports science.

**The good coach needs a thorough grasp of how to coach, apply and use:**

- Stance, guard and footwork
- Punches and defences
- Warming up
- Sparring
- Padwork
- Shadow boxing
- Hitting equipment
- Rules and regulations
- Fitness testing
- Running for conditioning
- Skipping
- Circuit training
- Weight training
- Core stability
- Speed, agility, quickness and balance
- Flexibility
- Strength, endurance and power

### 4 EFFECTIVE COACHING SKILLS

It's often how people coach rather than what they coach that differentiates good from great coaches. You should focus on the way you coach, on how you build relationships, how you communicate, how you observe, analyse and develop skills and provide feedback.

**Your skills should include:**

- How to demonstrate
- How to explain
- How to observe
- How to develop skills
- How to build, plan and repair coaching sessions and training programmes
- How to provide constructive feedback
- How to develop other coaches in your team
- How to analyse and make decisions based on analysis
- How to build rapport



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# SECTION 5

## SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE

A top priority for every coach is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all their boxers, especially those who are under 18 for whom you have an additional duty of care.

This section will help you to review all the areas you need to consider and the specific responsibilities you have as a level II coach. Please don't be put off by all this but do take very careful notice of what you need to do and not do. This section is of particular importance for the head coach at an EB boxing club.

### Key areas include:

- Risk assessments
- Insurance
- Injuries and illnesses
- Accidents and emergencies
- Hand protection
- Coaching codes of conduct
- Good coaching practice and safeguarding of young and vulnerable people
- Managing inappropriate behaviour
- Nutrition, hydration and weight making

## ▼ SAFE COACHING

The boxer/coach relationship is one of the most personal in sport. The health and well-being of the boxer comes first. You are there to protect boxers as well as to offer them carefully graded challenges to improve as well as to develop life skills. A number of factors need to be considered to ensure their safety and well-being. All the activities you deliver must be in line with EB's policies and guidelines ([www.englishboxing.org](http://www.englishboxing.org)).

### Risk assessments:

- Regular risk assessments are essential to protect both the boxers and the coach.
- Every facility should have its own risk assessment checklist and procedure and you must be familiar with this.
- Lead coaches have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that formal risk assessments take place and they should direct you regarding your role in conducting them.
- Coaches should always undertake risk assessments for the activities they are delivering, even if this done in an informal manner.
- Things that should be checked can be ascertained from the risk assessment on the following pages.



## The Ring

- Ropes, rope ties and turnbuckles: ropes should be securely fastened and not frayed.
- Underlay: in good repair and of sufficient thickness as stated in the rules of boxing.
- Canvas: tight, smooth with no rips or tears.

## Gym equipment

- Always ensure there is sufficient space around the equipment for it to be used safely.
- Punch bags: sufficiently padded to not cause hand damage (i.e. no 'hard spots').
- Floor-to-ceiling balls: anchor point secure, elastics in good condition (tightened rubber ages quickly).
- Chains and fastenings: no broken links, no bent fastenings, securely tightened.
- Mats: no tears or rips.
- Skipping ropes: should have secure handles.
- Benches: splinter free, no broken components.
- Medicine balls: no splits in the leather.
- Weights, stands, bars and collars: secure collars, no damage to welds.
- Aerobic equipment (e.g. bikes, cross trainers) maintained in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations

When assembling any equipment, it is important that the manufacturer's instructions are followed. When carrying/moving equipment, you should not try to lift anything beyond your capability and always use safe manual handling techniques to prevent injury (i.e. keep a straight back, bend at the knees, get help from a partner).

## The gym space

- The floor is clean and free from clutter and has a non slip surface; blood and dirt can cause infection and illness and can be a slipping/tripping hazard.
- Gym equipment not in a hazardous position or blocking entry/exit points.
- Potential hazards to movement are minimised.

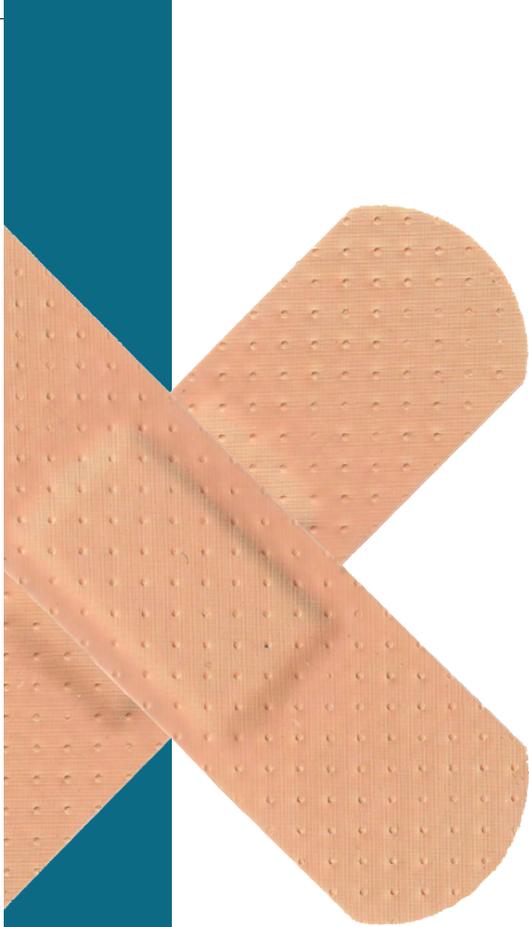
## First Aid

- All coaches must hold an appropriate first aid certification as specified by EB and know where and how to access emergency help (i.e. the telephone number of the nearest hospital casualty department should be posted in the club; know the post code and address of your club/venue).
- There must be an accessible, fully equipped first aid box (the contents need to be monitored and date checked regularly).
- An accident/incident book is in place and accessible where injuries other than minor training injuries are logged.
- In the event of any illness or injury (other than a superficial training injury), it's the responsibility of the club to assign someone to attend the casualty department with the boxer and, in the case of the young boxer, to notify the parent or carer.

## The Boxer

- The medical status of all boxers must be known and this information should be recorded prior to any activity taking place, for example via a registration form.
- Emergency contact details for a parent/guardian must be held for each boxer.
- Any injury or illness during the training session needs to be logged in the incident book.
- Any injury from previous contests or sparring needs to be taken into account (an assessment of the severity of the effects and readiness for training).
- Correct bandaging of the hands needs to be taught and monitored.
- Hygiene and cleanliness of gear, including gum shield, to be stressed.
- No jewellery to be worn, especially in sparring.





## Sparring

Details on how sparring can be organised and controlled is found in the sparring section of this handbook.

## Insurance

Appropriate public liability and professional indemnity insurance must be in place. England Boxing insurance does not cover this.

## Common Injuries and Illnesses

There are a number of common injuries and illnesses that can occur within boxing.

- Broken ribs
- Asthma
- Broken nose and jaw
- Cuts
- Shoulder dislocation
- Bruising
- Broken hand
- Soft tissue injuries
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Sickness

## Accidents and Emergencies

It's important that injuries and emergencies are dealt with quickly and calmly so that any distress is kept to a minimum and to prevent the situation from escalating.

- Stay calm but act swiftly and observe the situation.
- Make sure the area is safe.
- Ensure that injured and first aiders are not at risk of further injury.
- Listen to what the injured person is saying.
- Alert the first aider who should take appropriate action for minor injuries.
- In the event of an injury requiring specialist treatment, call the emergency services.
- Deal with the rest of the group and ensure that they are adequately supervised.
- Do not move someone with major injuries.
- Wait for the emergency medics.
- Contact the injured person's parent/carer.
- Complete an incident/accident report form.





## ▼ HAND PROTECTION

### **Hands are not made for hitting**

Hands are made for grasping and manipulating objects. If they are used for hitting, they will soon be damaged unless precautions are taken to reduce the risk of injury. The hands are easily damaged and can be slow to heal. Indeed a boxer that experiences a hand injury can be plagued with difficulties for many years.

The obvious precaution is that boxing gloves are worn. However it is also vital that the hands are properly wrapped (bandaged) whenever the striking of an opponent, a sparring partner, pads or any piece of hitting equipment is likely to occur.

### **Competition Gloves**

Competition gloves must bear the AIBA sticker of approval. If you feel the gloves provided at a tournament are damaged or worn in any way, they should be returned to tournament officials and replaced with a suitable pair.

### **Punch Bag Gloves**

Hitting heavy bags with gloves with inadequate padding is a common cause of hand injuries. If punch bag gloves are used in a gymnasium, they should regularly be checked for suitability. A glove that looks in good order may well be unsuitable. The main area for inspection is the padding across the knuckle. Many clubs prefer to use sparring gloves or competition gloves for punch bag work because there is less padding and support in the punch bag gloves. However, sparring and competition gloves are more expensive and easily damaged by a heavy workload.

### **Sparring Gloves**

There are no formal regulations for the use of sparring gloves. However prior to sparring, you should ensure they are of an appropriate size and weight and in good condition. The padding across the knuckles should be checked prior to any sparring taking place.

### **Handwraps / Bandages**

For training there are no rules. However it is just as important that the hands are properly wrapped to protect both boxers. Training bandages should always have sufficient 'give' or elasticity to shape and protect the hand without restricting blood flow or deforming the hand.



## ▼ HAND WRAPS

### Tips for effective hand wrapping

- The hand should be held out with the fingers slightly spread.
- A wrap of the thumb with a slight pull inwards will reduce the risk of injury to the thumb.
- When wrapping, there should always be a slight tension on the bandage but if the hand is wrapped too tightly it can restrict the flow of blood and make it difficult to make a fist.
- If the hand wraps don't 'feel right', they should be redone.
- Hand wraps have a top and bottom. Some hand wraps are clearly marked 'This Side Down'. The reason is that the velcro should be face up when finished. If you started with the wrong side down this isn't a problem, on the last step around the wrist twist the wraps over.
- Hand wraps should be regularly washed. Filthy hand wraps will harbour bacteria and boxers should be told this. Hand wraps can be machine washed; use a small nylon net to avoid tangling.
- Rolling the hand wraps back up when finished makes wrapping at the next training session much easier.
- For smaller hands, avoid wrapping too many times around the palm because the hand wraps will bunch up on the palm. For very small hands you might need to include a couple of extra times around the wrist.
- The size of the hand needs to be taken into account when wrapping it. A 4.5 metre bandage on a small hand of a schoolboy will simply be too long to allow a correct fist to be made; a 2.5 metre bandage on a senior heavyweight may not provide adequate protection.

Wrapping between fingers is commonplace in professional boxing. It will make it less likely that the wrap will 'ride up', but the inevitable spreading of the fingers arguably makes risk of injury more likely.

### KEY RULES FOR HAND WRAPS

- Boxers must wear AIBA approved wraps when competing in a championship. AIBA approval is not necessary in non-championship tournaments.
- A bandage must not be longer than 4.5 metres and not shorter than 2.5 metres
- The bandage should be 5.7 cm (2 inches) wide
- No other kind of bandages may be used
- The use of any kind of tapes, rubber or adhesive plaster as bandages is strictly forbidden.
- A single strap of adhesive not to exceed 7.6 cms (3 inches) long in length and 2.5 cms (1 inch) wide but in no case to exceed 5 cm width may be used on the upper wrist to secure the bandages



# RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

<b>Name of club</b>	
<b>Venue</b>	
<b>Name and position of person doing checks</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

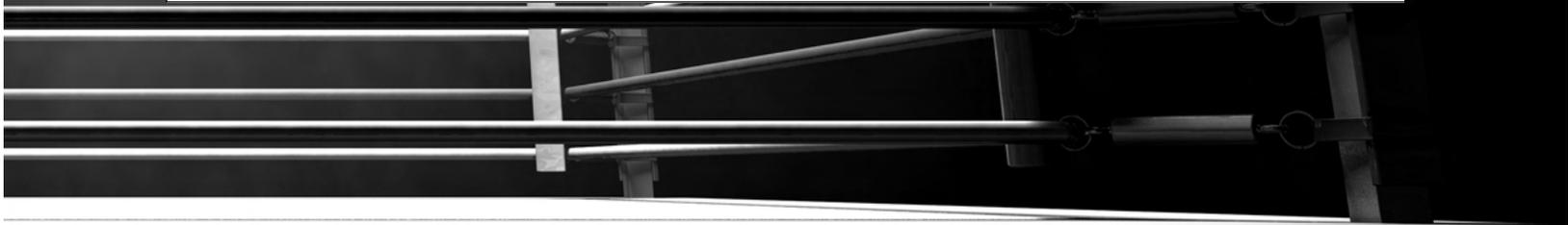
GYM SPACE	
The floor is clean, has a non-slip surface and is free from obstacles and other hazards	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment is not in a hazardous position or blocking entry/exit points	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Space is appropriate for the activity and number of participants	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lighting and heating is sufficient	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments / actions taken or required:</b>	





<b>THE RING</b>	
Ropes, rope ties and turnbuckles in good repair and ropes securely fastened and not frayed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Underlay in good repair and of sufficient thickness as stated in the rules and regulations	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Canvas is tight and smooth with no rips and tears	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments / actions taken or required:</b>	

<b>BOXERS' EQUIPMENT</b>	
All equipment is appropriate for the number, age and level of boxer	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Gloves are in good repair without rips and well padded	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Head guards should fit the boxers correctly and be fit for purpose	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Groin protectors are in good repair and are a good fit	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Mouth guards are properly fitted	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Hand wraps are of the appropriate length and material	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Footwear is in good repair and is a good fit	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments / actions taken or required:</b>	





<b>BOXERS</b>	
Medical and emergency contact information has been collected for all boxers	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Boxers are suitably attired and not wearing jewellery	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Any injuries are taken into account when planning and conducting activities, which must be suitable	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments / actions taken or required:</b>	

<b>SPARRING</b>	
All boxers that participate in sparring hold and appropriate BCRI card	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Sparring only takes place when a full coach or higher is present	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Sparring is not conducted by any coaches under the age of 18	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1 coaches do not conduct open sparring	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Suitable themes are chosen relative to age, experience and ability	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Correct equipment is worn at all times during sparring i.e. head guard, mouth guard, protector, gloves, hand wraps	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Boxers and coaches to understand the need for control in conditioned and technique sparring and understand that it is a learning experience	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Boxers are matched suitably according to age, experience, ability, weight and height	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
A range of sparring opportunities are on offer, tailored to the needs of the boxers	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments / actions taken or required:</b>	



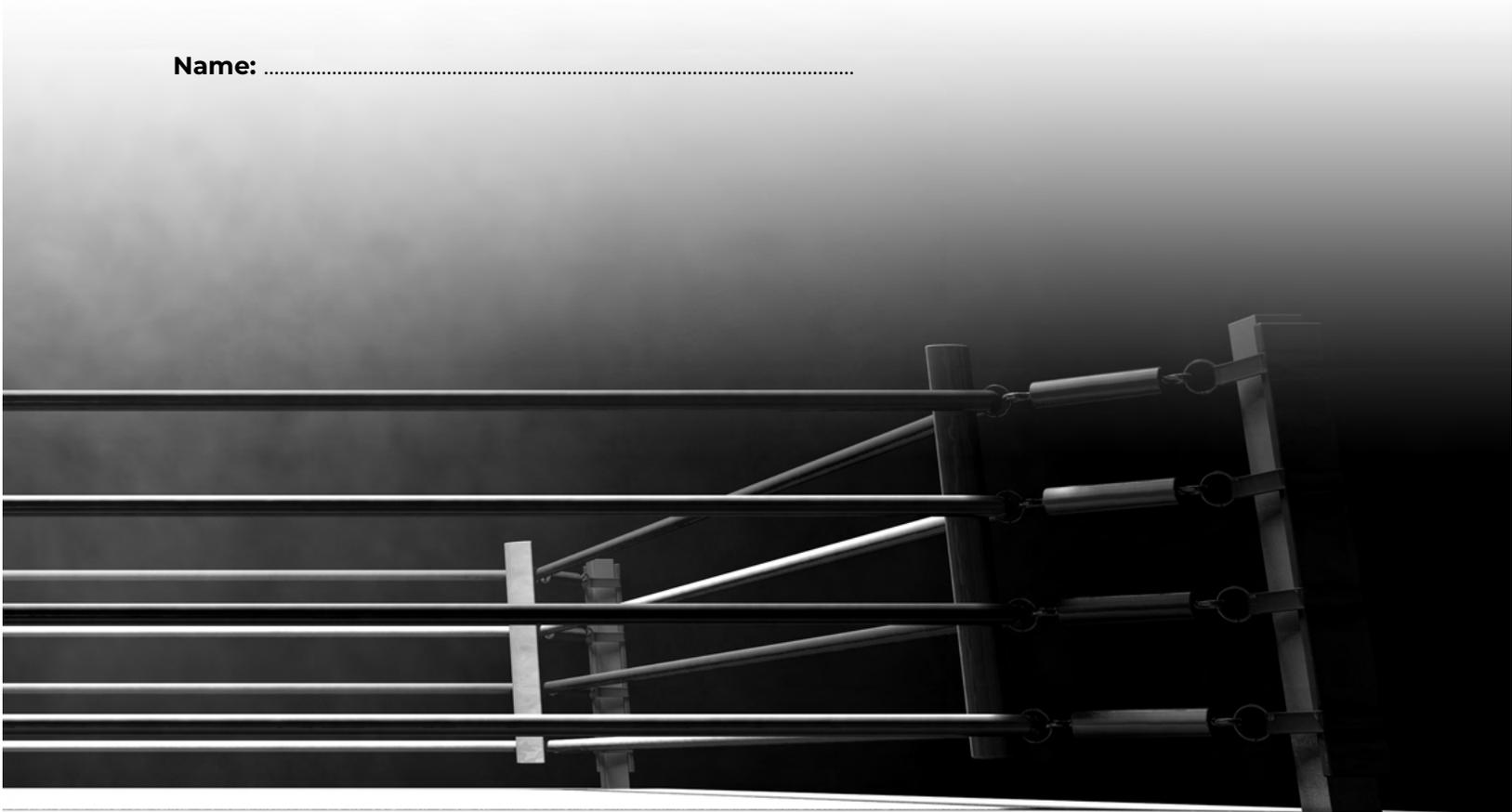


## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND FIRST AID

Emergency procedures are published and available for all to see, and all coaches are aware of them	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
There is an accident / incident book in place and accessible, in which injuries other than minor training injuries are logged	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
All coaches hold appropriate first aid qualifications	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
A working telephone is available	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency access points are checked and operational	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
A fully equipped first aid kit is available at all sessions	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments / actions taken or required:</b>	

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Name:** .....





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# SECTION 6

## SOFT COACHING SKILLS

### ▼ MANAGING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

You need to manage and maintain appropriate behaviour in your group; this will ensure the safety, enjoyment and positive learning experience of everyone.

#### **Encouraging positive behaviours**

Participants in your session will come with different ideas about what is acceptable behaviour. Do not make assumptions; find out more about them and check medical information. Recognise that some children will be brought up with different expectations, boundaries and modelled behaviour.

**There are some things you can do to encourage positive behaviours:**

#### **Be a role model**

For example, by being punctual, organised and professional, having a positive attitude and showing respect for all.

#### **Establish ground rules**

For example, about your expectations of them regarding attention and listening, safety rules, hygiene, positive behaviour to others. It's a good idea to involve the group in setting the ground rules and the sanctions.

#### **Reinforce and reward**

The behaviours you want; for example praise when someone does something right rather than always criticising when they misbehave; selecting a difficult child to demonstrate when she/he has done something well and recalling that behaviour in the next session.

## ▼ CAUSES OF MISBEHAVIOUR

All coaches are likely to have to deal with negative behaviour at some time. The key to managing behaviour is prevention based on creating a positive environment within which boxers are less likely to misbehave.

**Some of the many common reasons why young people tend to misbehave are shown below:**

- Coach is too harsh or too lenient
- Participants are bored
- Coach shouts at them
- Lack of realistic or relevant challenges
- Feel picked on or bullied
- Feel their good work isn't noticed
- Believe they are unfairly blamed for things
- Feel not being listened to
- Feel not respected or being treated rudely or unfairly

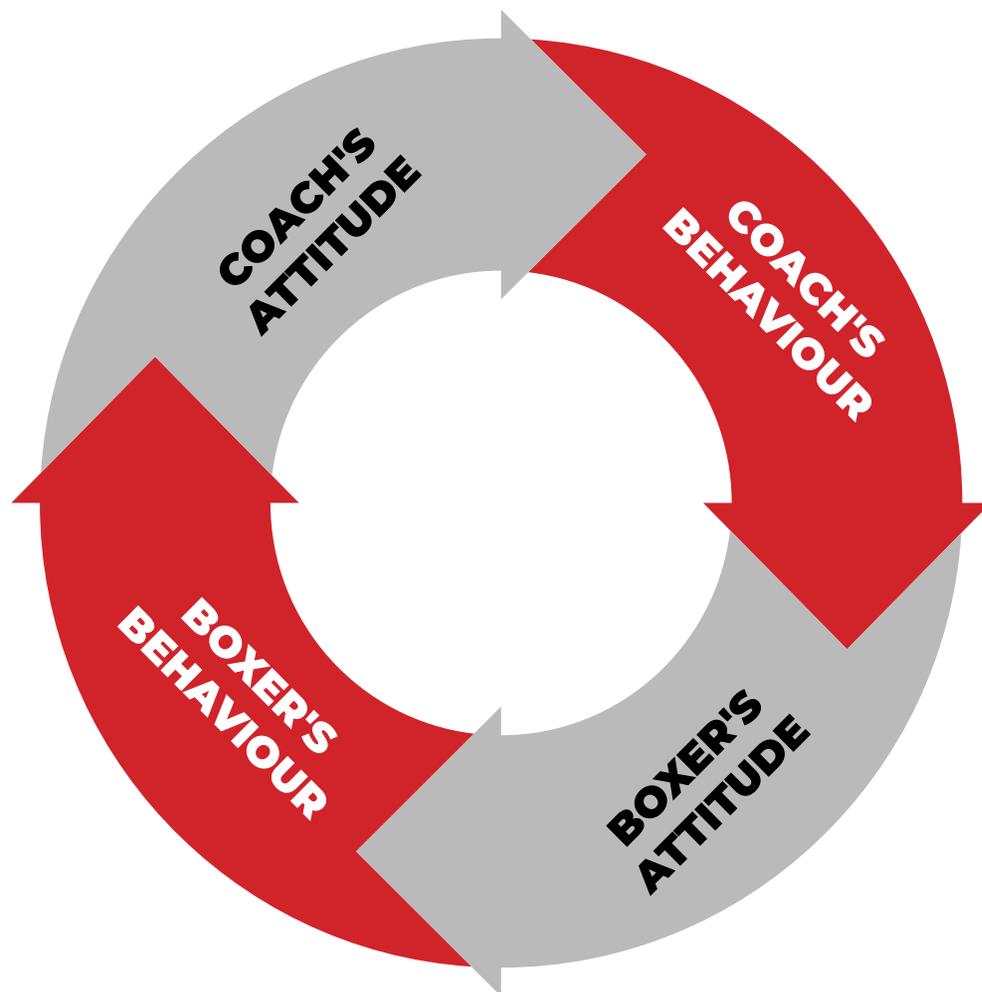
**Many of these are under your control; for example you can and should:**

- Make your sessions more interesting, varied and appropriately challenging
- Treat people fairly and equitably
- Show respect and ensure participants respect each other as well as other coaches

## ▼ MANAGING MISBEHAVIOUR

It is clear that there are many things that are within the coach's control when it comes to managing behaviour.

The diagram below highlights that the attitude of coaches will affect their behaviour, which will in turn affect the attitude and behaviour of the boxers. A positive attitude on behalf of the coach is therefore very important.





### **Prevention before cure:**

#### **To prevent misbehaviour, there are a number of things that you as coach can do:**

Have clear rules that everybody understands from the start; the boxers may be involved in setting the rules to give them greater ownership of them.

- Have clear consequences for misbehaviour.
- Run enjoyable, appropriately challenging and varied sessions.
- Treat boxers with respect.
- Listen to the boxers' opinions.
- Offer individual praise and constructive criticism to boxers.
- Reward those that display the behaviours that you want to encourage, reinforcing these behaviours.
- Set a positive example.

## **▼ DEALING WITH NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR**

When addressing negative behaviour, you will need to be even-handed, fair and consistent. Discipline should be administered as soon as practically possible and should be explained to the person (and parent/carer if appropriate).

### **Methods that may be used include:**

- Ignore negative behaviour (if safe and appropriate to do so) and reinforce every alternative positive behaviour
- Time out from the activity
- Reparation where the person has to make amends in some way
- De-escalation of the situation by talking through with the person in question
- Increased supervision by coaches, officials and volunteers
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements of acceptable future behaviour for continued participation
- Sanctions or consequences such as missing an event
- Seeking additional specialist support by working in partnership with other agencies to ensure that the individual's needs are met, for example referral for support to children's social care, discussion with the child's key worker if they have one, or speaking to the child's school about management strategies (all require parental consent unless the child is felt to be at risk or in need of protection)
- Temporary or permanent exclusion.

### **You should never:**

- Use or threaten physical punishment
- Refuse to speak to or interact with the person
- Deprive the person of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities
- Use verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

### **REMEMBER:**

- Many reasons for misbehaviour are within the control of the coach (eg boredom and lack of challenge)
- Your attitude and behaviour will affect the attitude and behaviour of the boxers
- It is important that you adopt a positive and professional attitude, that you are an excellent role model
- You should always seek to prevent misbehaviour by setting clear rules and consequences of misbehaviour, running enjoyable sessions and establishing a positive coaching environment where boxers are treated with respect
- When dealing with misbehaviour, you should always be even-handed, fair and consistent when applying any sanctions.



## ▼ CODE OF CONDUCT – BOXERS

- Always do your best in every situation;
- Be punctual at all times for training and competition and be ready and prepared at the appropriate time given to you by your coach or team manager;
- Attend all meals and eat the appropriate food ensuring that adequate levels of nutrition and fluids are consumed;
- No boys should enter girls changing rooms and vice versa;
- No intimate relationships shall be allowed between players or players and coaches travelling together;
- Treat all accommodation with the utmost respect ensuring that they are not the subject of damage and are left tidy when vacating – all damage or losses must be reported to the coach or team manager;
- Never bring other persons of the opposite gender to yourself into accommodation areas unless permitted and supervised by your coach or team manager;
- Never bring alcohol or drugs into your accommodation or purchase or consume such substances whilst travelling or accommodated during ABAE tournaments, camps or squads;
- Never use foul or other inappropriate language;
- If you are stopped or detained by hotel security, police or other recognised authority, you must inform your coach or team manager immediately;

**On tours, camps or squads, all boxers should be in their respective rooms at the following times and should not leave unless in an emergency:**

**18 years and over** – at the discretion of the coach or Team manager;

**Under 18 years** – 10.30pm

**Under 15 years** – 10pm

**Under 13 years** – 9.30pm

Always observe curfews set by your coach or team manager – breaches may result in disciplinary action; there may of course be circumstances where these timings cannot be achieved, however variations may only be sanctioned by the chief coach or team manager;

- If you cannot sleep when retired, you should be resting;
- If you feel unwell or have an accident, you should report this to your coach or team manager immediately;
- At tournament venues, always treat it with respect and always ensure that you leave it tidy after your use;
- You must always be respectful to ABAE Coaches, Team managers and officials – dissent will not be tolerated during competition under any circumstances;
- Boxers should not take or otherwise interfere with another boxer's or coaches property;
- When travelling in vehicles seat restraints must be used at all times;
- When travelling abroad all boxers must respect the local culture, clothing and customs of the country visited;
- Boxers should at all time be aware, when travelling abroad they are representing the Amateur Boxing Association of England and are ambassadors of England;
- Always obey instructions given by coaches or the team manager;
- Always be polite to all people you meet whilst a member of a team or squad, particularly your opponents and fellow team members;
- Always be aware of your personal safety as you would in your home environment, do not wander off alone, do not engage in conversation with strangers and under no circumstances should you enter a stranger's vehicle;
- If you ever become separated from your party whilst abroad, always report to the nearest police station, if at a port or airport contact the port security post, or if near a tournament venue, contact a member of the organising committee;
- Take responsibility for yourself in and out of competition or training;
- Use any free time constructively relaxing or focusing on the next stage of training or competition;
- Always respect and never underestimate your opponent;
- Always encourage and support your fellow team members at all times without behaving in an unsporting way towards your opponents;
- Never bully a fellow team member or an opponent – this will not be tolerated under any circumstances.





## ▼ COACH'S EYE

Developing your 'coaching eye' to identify the things that will make a big difference is a really important coaching skill.

Even at the beginner/novice stage, where errors may be more obvious, it's important to become an expert observer; this isn't easy as boxing movements are often fast and there's a lot going on at the same time.

- Look at the whole action.
- Then break it down to focus on one body part, one phase or one coaching point at a time.
- Look from different angles, you will see different things.
- Observe enough times to build up an accurate picture of what's happening; looking just once or twice may give an inaccurate snapshot of what's happening consistently.
- Only when you have a really accurate picture in your head should you move from observation to analysis.
- As you begin to coach more expert boxers, your coaching eye has to become even more discerning, for as the standard of opposition improves, the things which will make a difference may be very subtle and may be as much mental as physical.





## ▼ ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING

Once you have this accurate picture of the boxer you can start to analyse, to compare what you have observed with your picture of what the technique, action or behaviour should look like.

This involves identifying where the two match and where there are mismatches, and then making a decision about what to do.

Once you have your matches and mismatches, deciding the correct action is a central coaching skill and perhaps the hardest.

### **You could decide to:**

- Reinforce or praise a 'match' (what the boxer is doing well); this might be a good decision to ensure each boxer can experience a reasonable amount of success and can build confidence.
- Correct a 'mismatch' (something that is incorrect); If there are several errors and you decide to correct one (don't overload).
- See if you can identify a root cause of other errors so that by correcting this one, others will automatically improve. If errors seem unrelated, focus on correcting the one that is likely to make the biggest difference to performance.

## ▼ FEEDBACK SKILLS

Ensure you have observed for long enough to build an accurate picture of what's happening consistently, then carefully analyse before deciding if, when and how to provide feedback.

**Feedback is essential to learning and can be divided into two main types:**

### **INTRINSIC FEEDBACK**

Through sensors in the eyes, ears, muscles, joints. This is always available to the participant but not always used.

### **ADDITIONAL EXTRINSIC FEEDBACK**

Provided by some external source (e.g. coach, spectator, video).

Both are important. Feedback should not be given all the time; more at the early stages of learning. Although it might produce rapid short-term gains, constant feedback delays long-term learning by making the participant coach-dependent.

**If it is to be effective, feedback needs to be given in the right way:**

- Ask a question to find out what the participant noticed; if you jump in too quickly with your own comments, you will interfere with the boxer's own readily available intrinsic feedback.
- The feedback you give needs to be limited to one or two things, perhaps one positive reinforcement and one correction; it can be about effort and behaviour not just technique.
- Any more than two bits of information and it will be too much for the boxer to process and use.
- Keep it specific, simple, honest and positive (not critical); avoid vague empty comments such as: 'well done', and provide information: 'well done, you moved your feet much more quickly that time'.
- Use an open question (e.g. what will you now do? Rather than a closed question such as, do you understand?) to check whether the feedback has been taken on board and they know precisely what to practise.
- Think carefully about the feedback you give during a competition; if you lose composure and give negative feedback to a boxer under pressure, the boxer is unlikely to turn things round.
- Take care when to give feedback following competition; if emotions are still running high, a full analysis of performance might be better saved for the next training session.





48.





# SECTION 7

## NUTRITION, HYDRATION AND WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

### ▼ THE BODY AS A MACHINE

The physical workings of the body can be described as a very complex machine. Even if we don't understand all the mechanisms in detail, we DO understand the role which the various elements of nutrition and training play in staying healthy, getting fit and in gaining and losing weight.

#### What are the elements of nutrition?

Dieticians often describe the ideal diet as 'the happy heptagon'. The implication being that there are seven elements to the balanced diet...

#### CARBOHYDRATE

Carbs are our main source of energy and vital fuel for all athletes. They can be classified as either complex carbohydrate or simple sugars. Complex carbohydrates are generally preferable as they release their energy more slowly. Sugary foods can give a quick energy boost, a 'sugar rush'. Foods rich in carbohydrate include: Bread, potato, pasta and rice.

#### PROTEIN

This is the nutrient that is essential to the growth and repair of muscles and other body tissues. We all need protein and boxers in training need more than sedentary people since the training and competition places demands on the ability of the body to repair itself. How much extra protein is needed by athletes in training varies from sport to sport. The English Institute of Sport nutrition fact file on protein states that there is NO research evidence that more than 2g of protein for every Kilo of bodyweight is needed to repair and grow. For a 60Kg boxer this would mean 120g of protein as a MAXIMUM and this can be got easily through a normal diet without the need for expensive supplements. The boxer is likely to need a little more protein than the average person due to the requirement to repair and build the body after competition. Proteins are sometimes described as being 'first class' or 'second class'. First class protein tends to come from animal products such as meat, fish and milk. Second class protein come from plants and sources include grains, nuts and pulses.

## FAT

Fat is another useful source of energy it can be classified as saturated and unsaturated when in the form of dietary fat. Saturated fat in large quantities is implicated in the development of coronary heart disease and needs to be kept to the minimum in the healthy boxer's diet. Saturated fats tend to come from animal products such as cheese, cream and meat. Unsaturated fat is a more 'healthy' fat and is a better way of taking the necessary proportion of fat in the diet. Unsaturated fat tend to come from plants such as rapeseed, olives and sunflowers.

## FIBRE

Is a form of carbohydrate that the body is unable to digest and has no real nutritional value; however that does not mean that it has no value. Fibre absorbs water and when present in faeces makes it easier to pass through the digestive system. It also increases bulk in the diet without adding calories. **Sources of fibre**

### include:

- Whole grains
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Nuts
- Legumes

## VITAMINS

Used in the chemical processes which make the human body function. Vitamins are of two types – fat soluble and water soluble.

### Foods high in vitamin A

Vitamin A is a fat-soluble nutrient. It helps your body form healthy teeth, bones, soft tissues, and skin. It can also help you ward off bacterial and viral infections, prevent night blindness, and keep hair and nails healthy.

#### Foods that are particularly high in vitamin A include:

- Carrots
- Sweet potatoes
- Squash
- Apricots
- Spinach, kale, and Brussel sprouts

### Foods high in vitamin B

Vitamins B6, B12, and B9 are essential for proper nerve function, the synthesis of DNA, and the formation of red blood cells. They also help maintain your brain function, prevent anaemia, and support metabolism.

#### Foods that are particularly high in these vitamins include:

- Meat, poultry, and fish and seafood, including mussels and oysters
- Eggs
- Milk
- Fortified breakfast cereals

### Foods high in vitamin C

Vitamin C is also known as ascorbic acid. It's a powerful antioxidant that helps protect the health of cells. It improves the body's iron absorption. It's also important for promoting healthy teeth and gums, healing wounds, and helping resist infection.

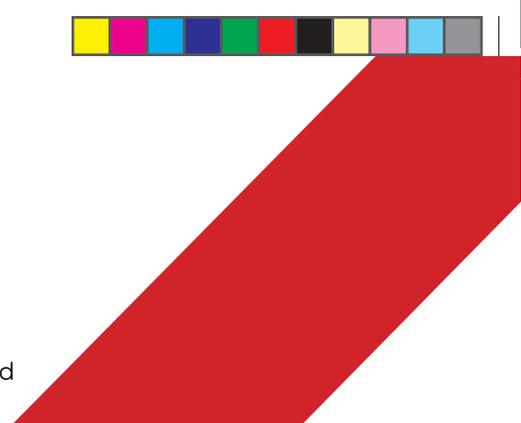
#### Foods that are particularly high in vitamin C include:

- Citrus fruits
- Strawberries
- Bell peppers
- Broccoli
- Dark leafy greens such as kale

### Foods high in vitamin D

Vitamin D is a unique vitamin. On top of absorbing it from foods eaten, the body can also synthesize it from sunlight. It's critical for the health of bones and the immune system, as well as calcium absorption. **Though sunshine is by far the richest source of vitamin D, foods that also provide vitamin D include:**

- Some seafood, such as salmon, herring, trout, and oysters
- Milk
- Eggs
- Fortified breakfast cereal



## Foods high in vitamin E

Like vitamin C, vitamin E is a powerful antioxidant. It helps protect your cells from damage. It also helps your body use vitamin K and repair muscle cells.

### Foods that are particularly high in vitamin E include:

- Sunflower seeds and almonds
- Spinach, chard, and turnip
- Bell peppers
- Asparagus

## Foods high in vitamin K

Vitamin K is critical for the formation of blood clots. Without it, someone could bleed to death from a simple cut. It may also help maintain bone strength in older adults.

### Foods that are particularly high in vitamin K include:

- Kale
- Spinach
- Cabbage
- Turnip
- Lettuce
- Brussel sprouts
- Broccoli

## Stock up on vitamin-rich foods

It may be tempting to turn to supplements to get your fill of vitamins. But pills are no substitute for a well-balanced diet. To get the nutrients you need, stock up on high-vitamin foods that are known to pack a nutritious punch.

If you suspect you may be missing crucial nutrients in your diet, talk to your doctor or dietitian. They may recommend changes to your eating habits. They may also encourage you to add a supplement to your daily routine.

## MINERALS

Vital to healthy body function e.g. Iron deficiency is implicated in anaemia where red blood cells are not providing adequate oxygen to body tissues and calcium deficiency is implicated in osteoporosis where the bones become brittle.

### Macro and Trace Minerals

The two kinds of minerals are: **macrominerals** and **trace minerals**. Macro means 'large' in Greek (and the body needs **larger** amounts of macrominerals than trace minerals). The macromineral group is made up of calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, sodium, potassium, chloride, and sulphur. A trace of something means that there is only a little of it. So even though the body needs trace minerals, it needs just a tiny bit of each one. Trace minerals includes iron, manganese, copper, iodine, zinc, cobalt, fluoride, and selenium.

### Calcium

Calcium is the top macromineral when it comes to your bones. This mineral helps build strong bones. It also helps build strong, healthy teeth, for chomping on tasty food.

#### Foods rich in calcium include:

- Dairy products, such as milk, cheese, and yogurt
- Canned salmon and sardines with bones
- Leafy green vegetables, such as broccoli
- Fortified foods such as cereal

### Iron

The body needs iron to transport oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body. The entire body needs oxygen to stay healthy and alive. Iron helps because it's important in the formation of haemoglobin.

#### Foods that are rich in iron include:

- Meat, especially red meat, such as beef
- Tuna and salmon
- Eggs
- Beans
- Baked potato with skins
- Dried fruits, like raisins
- Leafy green vegetables, such as broccoli
- Whole and enriched grains, like wheat or oats





## Potassium

Keeps the muscles and nervous system working properly.

### Foods are rich in potassium include:

- Bananas
- Tomatoes
- Potatoes and sweet potatoes, with skins
- Green vegetables, such as spinach and broccoli
- Citrus fruits, like oranges
- Low-fat milk and yogurt
- Legumes, such as beans, split peas, and lentils

## Zinc

Zinc helps the immune system, which is the body's system for fighting off illnesses and infections. It also helps with cell growth and helps heal wounds and bruises.

### Foods rich in zinc include:

- Beef, pork, and dark meat chicken
- Nuts, such as cashews, almonds, and peanuts
- Legumes, such as beans, split peas, and lentils

## WATER

Hydration is crucial in maintaining a healthy body and also for carrying other nutrients. The various parts of the human body are largely composed of water and it is essential in carrying other nutrients on which healthy body function depends. It has been shown that 76% of the brain is water, 82% of the blood and 90% of the lungs. Dehydration is a potentially very serious condition and in extreme cases can lead to death.

## Energy Density

**Carbohydrate** has 4 calories per gram and is classified as high or low GCI

**Protein** has 4 calories per gram

**Fat** has 9 calories per gram

Water, vitamins and minerals have no calorific value and are not 'fuel' in the sense that carbs, fats and proteins are, but they are vital to the process by which these fuels are burnt for energy and make the motor of the body run.

## The 'Eatwell Plate'

The 'Eatwell plate' (devised by the Food Standards Agency) can help your boxers to follow a balanced diet. It makes healthy eating easier to understand by showing the types and proportions of foods that are needed for a healthy and well balanced diet. The image on the right shows the proportions of fruit and vegetables, proteins, fats, dairy and carbohydrates.





## ▼ COUNTING CALORIES (OR JOULES)

### 1 Calorie = 4.2 Joules

#### The basic facts are simple:

- We gain weight when we take on board more fuel in the form of calories than we burn through our daily activities.
- We lose weight when we take on board less calories than we need to maintain our bodyweight.
- It should be remembered that eating lots of calorie dense fatty foods (especially when combined with sugar) means that the target calorie intake will likely be exceeded very quickly; possibly at the expense of the carbohydrate needed to fuel intense activity and the protein needed to repair body tissue.
- An increase in regular exercise will help to increase expenditure of calories and the more physically active a person, the more calories they burn. If physical activity is increased and food intake remains the same, the extra energy needed will be provided from stored body fat when low intensity long duration activity is undertaken (e.g. jogging or brisk walking).

## ▼ STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE NUTRITION

### Base meals on starchy foods

- Encourage boxers to include at least one starchy food with each main meal. Some people think they are fattening but they contain less than half the calories of fat.
- There needs to be an awareness of what fats are added when cooking and serving these foods because this increases the calorie content.
- Wholegrain foods are a good option as they contain lots of fibre.

### Eat lots of fruit and vegetables

- Encourage boxers to eat five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables per day. These can be fresh, frozen, dried, tinned or juiced.

### Eat more fish

- Encourage your boxers to aim for at least two portions per week including one oily fish such as salmon, mackerel, fresh tuna or sardines.
- Fish is an excellent source of protein and contains many vitamins and minerals.

### Cut down on saturated fat

- Encourage boxers to eat these foods less often and in smaller amounts.
- Foods containing high saturated fat include meat pies, sausages, meat with visible white fat, hard cheese, cakes and biscuits, cream, butter and lard.
- A high amount of fat would be considered as more than 20g per 100g, low fat is 3g or less per 100g. High saturated fat is considered as more than 5g per 100g and low is 1.5g or less per 100g.

### Cut down on sugar

- Encourage boxers to eat sugar less often and in smaller amounts.
- Many sugary foods are also high in calories.
- A high amount of sugar is more than 15g of sugars per 100g, low is 5g or less per 100g.
- On food labels sugars may be listed as either sucrose, glucose, fructose, maltose, hydrolysed starch and invert sugar, corn syrup or honey. If one of these is near the top of the list it is likely to be high in added sugars.





## Eat less salt

- Encourage boxers to eat less salt as too much salt can raise blood pressure; around 75% of the salt we eat is already in the food that's bought.
- A high amount of salt is considered as 1.5g per 100g, low is 0.3g or less. No more than 6g should be eaten per day.

## Don't skip breakfast

- Reinforce the importance of eating breakfast as it provides the energy needed to face the day and contains many vitamins and minerals that are good for health. Some believe that skipping breakfast will help with weight loss but missing meals isn't good for people as they can miss out on essential vitamins and minerals. There is some evidence to suggest that eating breakfast can actually help people to control their weight.

## Weight loss and gain

- The equation is simple, if your boxers burn more calories than they consume, they will lose weight; if they consume more than they burn, they will gain weight.
- One size does not fit all: a successful weight loss plan is one that is tailored to the individual circumstances of the boxer, taking account of his or her age, physical characteristics, lifestyle and training patterns. Boxers are individuals, one size does not fit all.
- Up to 1kg of weight loss per week: sport scientists and dieticians generally agree that weight loss of around 1kg per week is the maximum any athlete should aim for in order to remain healthy and capable of the intense training required by boxers.

## Weight loss and the adolescent

- In the case of the adolescent boxer, whose body is still maturing, the greatest care needs to be taken to avoid unhealthy weight loss programmes.
- Starvation diets, especially when the adolescent boxer is going through a growth spurt, are unethical as well as potentially damaging to the growing child. They are unacceptable and should form no part of a boxer's preparation.
- The means by which boxers lose those last few kilos are often badly flawed and sometimes the weight loss practices are actually dangerous and violate the ABAE's commitment to Coaching Ethics and Child Safety.
- In the case of the adolescent boxer whose body is still maturing the greatest care needs to be taken to avoid unhealthy weight loss programmes (which can follow a period of eating an unbalanced junk food diet).

## Sauna suits are of limited use

- Training in sauna suits has a very limited use for losing up to 1 kg prior to a championship weigh-in for senior boxers only.
- The weight lost through the use of these suits is fluid that will be replaced when the boxer drinks.
- Some believe that by wearing sauna suits it is possible to burn more calories and this may be true; however it also leads to earlier fatigue (physically and mentally) therefore reducing the amount and quality of work that is done, and ultimately reducing the number of calories burnt and the ability to recover and train again.

## Good practice in the gym – regular monitoring and record keeping

- Weight (and body fat percentage, if possible) should be monitored regularly in order to fine tune the nutrition the boxer needs to train and compete. The coach working with Elite level boxers, or those who have ambitions to box at Elite level, will keep detailed notes of bodyweight changes at various calorie intakes and activity levels.
- The amount of water lost through sweating in various types and intensities of training session also needs to be monitored through regular weighing, before and after the session. Rehydration after fluid loss is a crucial part of effective training.

The tendency of boxers to weigh themselves **AFTER** a strenuous training session and before rehydration has taken place is a very misleading guide to actual bodyweight. The boxer will inevitably weigh less because of the water loss from the workout and so this is a very inaccurate guide to the changes in bodyweight in contest preparation.



## ▼ THE 'OPTIMUM' BODYWEIGHT IS NOT NECESSARILY THE LOWEST BODYWEIGHT

The weight of the body comes from the structure of the bones and head, the internal organs and the fat, water and muscle which the body carries.

The fit and powerful boxer has low body fat and a degree of muscular development which fits the demands of the sport and also fits his/her height and bone structure. We can't alter adult bone structure through training but our bodies will grow and develop through adolescence into adulthood (see Peak Height Velocity - PHV and Child Development). Muscular development and body fat ARE within our power to change. Fine tuning the 'machine' for competition will mean dealing with the fuel as well as the training load and the two are very closely related.

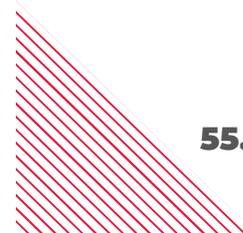
Beyond what is necessary to remain healthy and to fuel some aspects of training such as running, fat has no useful role to play in the physical make-up of the boxer, unlike muscle, the foundation for strength and power, and water, which is essential for health. The boxer in training will need to avoid losing 'water weight' through dehydration. The main objective of a nutrition programme for boxing must therefore be to maintain an appropriate lean muscle mass which is properly hydrated and a body which is fit and powerful.

## ▼ GAINING AND LOSING WEIGHT - THE FACTS BASAL METABOLIC RATE (BMR) AND BASIC ENERGY REQUIREMENT (BER)

The basic facts are simple. We gain weight when we take on board more fuel in the form of calories in food than we burn, and we lose weight when we take on board less calories than we need to maintain our bodyweight.

Too many calories taken in relative to the BER (including the exercise regime) equals weight gain. Too few calories eaten given our energy output (including training) equals weight loss.

It's also worth remembering that we can't 'spot reduce'. It's not possible to target weight loss to a particular part of the body. Fat deposits will diminish through appropriate nutrition and training wherever they are on the body. Muscle does NOT turn into fat when a person stops exercising. Likewise it's not possible to turn fat into muscle. The two are completely different.



## ▼ ENGLAND BOXING WEIGHT CATEGORIES



Championship weight categories for male and **FEMALE MINORS AND SCHOOLBOYS AND SCHOOLGIRLS** are:

Over 28kgs to 29.5kgs  
 31kgs ● 32.5kgs ● 34kgs  
 35.5kgs ● 37kgs ● 38.5kgs  
 40kgs ● 41.5kgs ● 43kgs  
 44.5kgs ● 46kgs ● 48kgs  
 50kgs ● 52kgs ● 54kgs  
 56kgs ● 59kgs ● 62kgs  
 65kgs ● 68kgs ● 72kgs

During a weigh-in these boxers are not permitted to lose in excess of the weight limits detailed below;  
 Up to 50kg – 300g  
 Up to 62kg – 500g  
 Over 62kg – 700g



Championship weight categories for **JUNIORS AND JUNIOR CADETS** are:

Over 34kgs to 36kgs  
 38kgs · 40kgs · 42kgs  
 44kgs · 46kgs · 48kgs  
 50kgs · 52kgs · 54kgs  
 57kgs · 60kgs · 63kgs  
 66kgs · 70kgs · 75kgs  
 80kgs · over 80kgs

During a weigh-in boxers are not permitted to lose in excess of the weight limits detailed below;  
 Up to 50kg – 300g  
 Up to 63kg – 500g  
 Over 63kg – 700g



Championship weight categories for **MALE YOUTHS** are:

Over 46kgs to 49kgs  
 52kgs · 56kgs · 60kgs  
 64kgs · 69kgs · 75kgs  
 81kgs · 86kgs\* · 91kgs  
 Over 91kgs.

\*86kg cruiserweight category is not an International pathway weight category.



Championship weight categories for **FEMALE YOUTHS** are:

Over 45kgs to 48kgs  
 51kgs · 54kgs · 57kgs  
 60kgs · 64kgs · 69kgs  
 75kgs · 81kgs · over 81kgs



Championship weight categories for **ELITE AND DEVELOPMENT MALE BOXERS** are:

Over 46kgs to 49kgs  
 52kgs · 56kgs · 60kgs  
 64kgs · 69kgs · 75kgs  
 81kgs · 86kgs\* · 91kgs  
 over 91kgs.

\*86kg cruiserweight category is not an International pathway weight category.



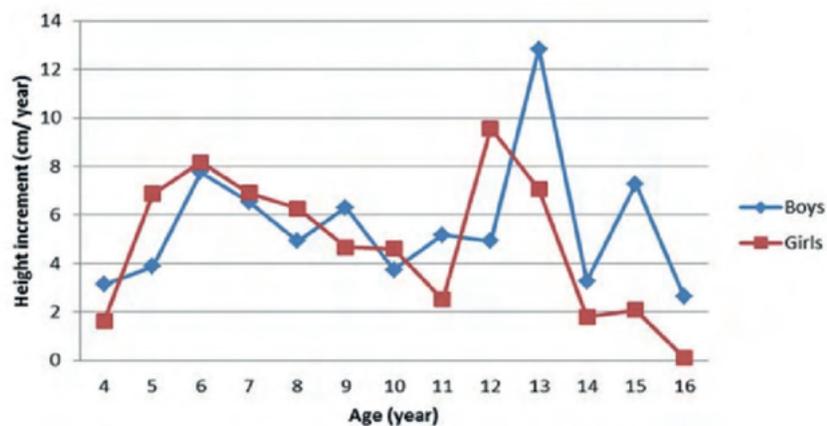
Championship weight categories for **ELITE AND DEVELOPMENT FEMALE BOXERS** are:

Over 45kgs to 48kgs  
 51kgs · 54kgs · 57kgs  
 60kgs · 64kgs · 69kgs  
 75kgs · 81kgs · over 81kgs.

## Weight classes – moving up or moving down safely and effectively

The boxer and coach will try to maintain fitness and power at the lightest possible bodyweight which fits with the boxer's physical make up. This is a critical matter for the growing adolescent since at puberty and through the early teens the changes in body shape and growth of the 'long' bones will have a big influence on bodyweight. Trying to fit the growing adolescent into a weight class which is too light for the developing skeletal structure is a major fault on the part of the coach and is against the England Boxing Code of Coaching Practice.

Gaining weight is not usually a priority in boxing (except for some special cases in adolescence and adulthood) but LOSING weight often is. The 'traditional' way in which boxers and their coaches prepare for competition has led to some dangerous practices, such as starving and dehydration. These are simply unethical and are rejected by England Boxing. In practical terms, starving the body of nourishment will also lead to the loss of lean body mass rather than the fat which was intended.



## How much extra food to add muscular bodyweight?

On top of a maintenance level, extra calories have to be consumed that will allow the boxer to gain weight. Unfortunately the most lean muscle mass possible to gain per year is somewhere in the region of 3.5 - 8kg! Even for the most genetically gifted who can naturally gain the full 8Kg (and this is rare), this only equates to a weekly weight gain of 0.15kg and requires increased calorie consumption above maintenance of only 150kcal per day! The human body tends to gain lean muscle mass, and strength, far more readily when there is a calorie excess, perhaps around 300 kcal per day. Adding muscle mass in this way is a tried and tested method and the boxer can then trim off the small amount of extra fat gained.

## Weight gain in adolescence and maturity

In some circumstances the mature boxer may need to add muscular bodyweight to 'fill out' in a weight class into which fits his/her height and bone structure. Here, in the case of a physically mature boxer, a programme of resistance training combined with a modified diet can add muscular bodyweight. The section on Resistance Training deals with the important issues of the growing adolescent and resistance training but the key point is that the growing child will not derive any significant benefit from a resistance training programme designed to achieve increased muscle mass until puberty.

Neither a weight training nor a nutrition programme on their own will add the required muscle but if combined together correctly they can have the desired effect and the resistance training programme MUST be one which encourages mobility, flexibility and explosive movement not just added muscle mass.

## Weight loss and 'making weight'

For boxers and their coaches it has been a tradition to aim to lose a small amount of weight at the end of a training programme in order to fit into the top of a particular weight class for the weigh-in and then rehydrate and eat so that the boxer gets back to a more 'normal' bodyweight for the bout. Elite boxers typically train and 'walk around' at a weight which is heavier than that at which they aim to compete. The big questions are how much heavier and how much time will the boxer need, to lose the weight safely? There is general agreement among Sports Scientists and dieticians that a weight loss of around 1kg per week is the maximum any athlete should be aiming for in order to remain healthy and capable of the intense training which boxers need. Some scientists suggest the weight loss should be even less.

Many 'traditional' boxing coaches may think these may seem like small amounts when compared with the sort of weight reduction they may have seen (or even encouraged) during pre-fight periods. It's also unfortunately true that many 'traditional' boxing coaches have been preparing their boxers in a way that makes peak performance less rather than more likely.



## ▼ THE GLYCEMIC INDEX

- The Glycemic Index (GI) is a relative ranking of carbohydrate in foods according to how they affect blood glucose levels
- Carbohydrates with a low GI value are more slowly digested, absorbed and metabolised and cause a lower and slower rise in blood glucose and, therefore insulin levels.
- Glucose itself has a GI of 100

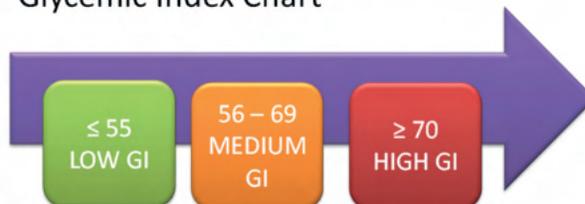
### What are High and Low GCI foods?

**Some examples: A GCI of 55 or less is considered low, 56-69 medium and 70+ considered high**

Lucozade Energy drink 95 GCI  
White Bread 78 GCI  
Cornflakes 80 GCI  
Spaghetti (white) 61 GCI  
Ice cream 61 GCI

Orange Juice 52 GCI  
Wholegrain bread 51 GCI  
All Bran Cereal 30 GCI  
Spaghetti (wholemeal) 32 GCI  
Milk (Full fat) 27 GCI

### Glycemic Index Chart



### What is glycogen and what does it do?

Glycogen is the body's major fuel source and is sometimes referred to as blood sugar. It's stored in the muscles for ready use and also in the liver. It's the fuel which the boxer will use in sparring, power training and interval work.

### When blood sugar levels spike following high GCI foods is there a reaction?

Yes. After the spike comes the trough when you feel lethargic and sleepy. This is exactly the sort of feeling you don't want before a bout or training session!

### Is there a spike followed by a trough after eating low GCI foods?

No. There is a small boost of energy but no big reaction as with high GCI foods so the boxer doesn't have to negotiate his/her way through the trough. This means that the body's energy stores remain on an even keel without wide swings.



## ▼ NUTRITION Q&A

### Do I need to buy protein supplements?

In general, no, save your money! A well balanced diet with frequent small meals (every three-four hours) and good natural protein sources from whole grains, beans and pulses, lean meat, eggs and low fat dairy products will give all the protein the boxer needs. Only 25-35 grams (depending on body weight) can be absorbed at a time and if you are a feather or lightweight boxer taking a protein shake containing 40grams of protein you will have very expensive urine!

**BEWARE OF BOXERS BELIEVING EVERYTHING THEY READ IN ADVERTISING**

### Are sports drinks likely to be helpful to the boxer in training?

**VERY DEFINITELY YES FOR SOME DRINKS – BUT NOT ALL.**

These drinks can be bought over the counter or made up from basic ingredients.

- Drinks to rehydrate (hypotonic) are very useful to the boxer;
- Drinks to rehydrate and also to enhance performance (isotonic) are especially useful after long training sessions;
- Drinks to recover from intense resistance training (hypertonic) are not especially useful to boxers;
- Hybrid sports drinks are increasingly available and have an additional component, which may be caffeine or whey protein.

## SPORTS DRINKS UNCOVERED



### HYPOTONIC

- Less than 5gms of carbs per 100ml
- Absorbed quicker than water
- Good for low intensity training less than one hour

### ISOTONIC

- 5-7gms carbs per 100ml
- Absorbed at the same rate as water
- Good for endurance sports over one hour training

### HYPERTONIC

- Over 7gms carbs per 100ml
- Absorbed at a slower rate as water
- Good for post-training to aid recovery

### Are all dietary fats created equal?

No. The sort of fats you get from oily fish (Omega 3 fats) are important in a healthy diet. The Saturated fats which are found in full fat milk and in the skin of grilled chicken are best avoided as far as possible!

### Does the right 'mix' of vitamins and minerals matter for healthy body function?

Yes. A lack of minerals can cause serious problems – at the simplest level in terms of cramp in the muscles after severe sweating but in the most serious cases of dehydration, mineral deficiency can cause heart malfunction and even death. Vitamins are crucial to the chemical processes on which the healthy body depends. Some vitamins are fat soluble and so some fat is necessary in the body for them to be absorbed. Some are water soluble.



### **How frequently should a boxer in training eat every day?**

First, have a good breakfast of low GCI foods! Then every three hours approximately so that the body always has fuel to burn. Try NOT to skip meals, just go for lower calorie alternatives. Snack on fruits and yoghurt and lean sources of protein. Skipping meals and feeling hungry puts the body on red alert and it starts to conserve fat. Hardly what you want!

### **What foods are regarded as 'good' foods (or even superfoods)**

Lean grilled chicken (without the skin!), tuna packed in sunflower oil or water, oily fish such as mackerel, herring and sardines, lean steak, porridge, fruit, yoghurt, cottage cheese, wholemeal bread and pasta with tomato sauce. Natural foods are always to be preferred. Avoid processed and junk foods!

### **When should the boxer eat after the workout and what should it consist of?**

The period 30 minutes after finishing is a crucial 'window of opportunity' when the boxer should be taking in high GCI foods (about 50g) to replenish the glycogen stores. The body will also need protein to repair the tissues stressed during the workout – especially if it's been a resistance training or sprint/interval training session.

### **How big is a portion?**

You will often see references in nutritional articles to 'portions' and this means a serving of food about the size of a pack of playing cards – which you could hold in the palm of the average person's hand.

### **Does muscle turn into fat after we stop training hard?**

No – fat and muscle are completely different substances. One can not 'turn into' the other. When boxers stop a programme of hard training and still eat in the way they did to fuel this training regime they are taking in more calories than they are burning off and so a gain in bodyfat is inevitable. If they stop the healthy diet which they consumed when in training and start to eat junk then the problems get even worse and the fat builds up even more. Losing that fat and regaining the lean muscle tissue takes a LOT of effort!





## ▼ WATER & HYDRATION

### How important is water as a nutritional element?

Absolutely essential! Becoming seriously dehydrated is one of the most dangerous things an athlete can do but dehydration **ALSO** impairs skilled performance.

- To lose 2.5Kg of water (where this 2.5Kg represents 4% of bodyweight) leads to seriously impaired performance which declines by 20-30%.
- For a 60Kg boxer a 4% loss of water weight is 2.4Kg.
- For a 75Kg boxer 4% water weight represents 3Kg.
- A 3.3Kg loss of water through sweating, where this equals 5% of the boxer's bodyweight can result in heat exhaustion.
- A 6.5kg of water loss where this represents as little as 10% of bodyweight can result in circulatory collapse and heat stroke.

### Water as a nutritional element?

#### Water makes up:

- 45-70% of the entire body
- 76% of the brain
- 82% of the blood
- 90% of the lungs

In everyday life, good hydration levels have been shown to greatly reduce the risk of developing a number of serious and chronic illnesses. In sport the very best case we can hope for when in a dehydrated state is a decrease in performance, at the very worst, dehydration can cause severe illness and death.

### Rehydration before competition

EIS data sheets on this topic recommend, on the basis of the sports science research, that a rehydration strategy for replacing a loss of 1Kg of water before a weigh-in would entail taking in 1.2 – 1.5 LITRES of fluid to restore the body to maximal functioning before the contest! To think of up to 3 litres of fluid being required in a short time frame to make good the loss of 2Kg of water weight is to enter the realm of fantasy. No boxer is going to be able to take that much fluid on board except over a period of several hours. The tournament is apt to be over by that time!

### Decline in performance with water loss

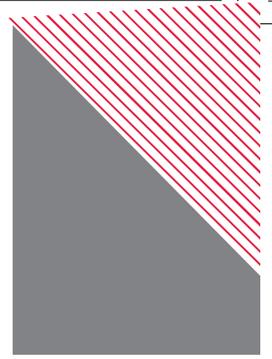
It would be a very strange coach who made the boxers he/she was responsible for act in such a way as to make peak performance LESS likely, yet that is exactly what coaches and boxers who indulge in rapid and severe water/weight loss are doing.

For the boxer, who relies on fast reactions and highly skilled movements, it's worth remembering that a loss of only 2% of bodyweight in sweating leads to a reduction of 20% in the ability to visually track an object (such as a punch), concentration, decision making and skilled movement.

Other tests on resistance training have shown that a decrease in hydration of 2-4% can reduce performance in a resistance training workout by up to 21%, a massive fall off in performance.

Research on runners has shown that even as little as 2-3% dehydration results in 3% reduction in performance over 1500m and 7% reduction in performance over 10000m.

For swimmers a mere 1% in dehydration resulted in a 2% slowing of pace.



## ▼ NOT JUST MAKING WEIGHT IN COMPETITION. TRAINING MATTERS TOO

The implication of this research in levels of hydration is that it's not only competition which is important. Training sessions and the order in which a workout is designed are important too if we are coaching skilled performance – especially learning new skills.

Coaches need to carefully monitor the training of boxers in the gym – especially where sparring is concerned. Going into the ring to spar after already losing a substantial amount of water in sweating and having failed to drink sufficient fluid will result in impaired performance and the risk of injury.

Equally, if the coach and boxer are working on a skill it makes little sense to do so when the athlete is suffering impairment in visual tracking, concentration and motor skill which research has shown follows from dehydration of even 2% of bodyweight.

### As a guide, 2% of bodyweight translates as:

48Kg boxer = 0.98Kg  
51Kg boxer = 1.02Kg  
54Kg boxer = 1.08Kg  
57Kg boxer = 1.14Kg  
60Kg boxer = 1.20Kg  
64Kg boxer = 1.28Kg  
69Kg boxer = 1.38Kg  
75Kg boxer = 1.50Kg  
81Kg boxer = 1.62Kg  
91Kg boxer = 1.82Kg

It is crucial that the coach and boxer track the amount of water weight which the boxer loses in a typical training session by 'before and after' weighing. A number of different sorts of training session will have to be sampled within the gym at various levels of heat and humidity.

The Elite level boxer and coach will have access to Exercise Physiologists to monitor hydration levels. Club boxers will not **BUT** this is no excuse for the coach and boxer not to have worked out some broad indicators as a guide to the effects of training.

## ▼ WHAT ABOUT SAUNA SUITS AND FORCED SWEATING FOR THE BOXER MAKING WEIGHT?

Traditional approaches to boxing training used to argue that if the human body is between 45% and 70% water surely it won't matter if the boxer trying to make weight at a weigh-in does so by losing a kilo (or perhaps more!) through sweating in a sauna, heavy clothing or a sauna suit and then visiting the scales?

The answer is that if this is only a small amount of weight (less than 2% of bodyweight – see table in the Hydration chapter) and the boxer is well hydrated already then it's not going to do much harm if the rehydration strategy is worked out in advance. There must be sufficient time between the weigh-in and the bout for the necessary amounts of fluid to be reasonably taken in before the bout without bloating.

For those boxers who habitually train in rubber sauna suits to lose weight it's worth remembering that the weight loss is almost all water and that the body is a wonderfully logical mechanism. For each action there is a reaction and the trade off for excessive (4%) water weight loss is seriously impaired performance.

## ▼ CONCLUSION

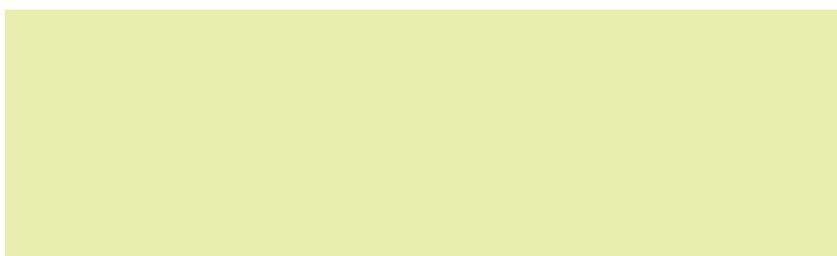
Water is a crucial nutrient – for maintaining general health and for success in competition and in skilled performance.





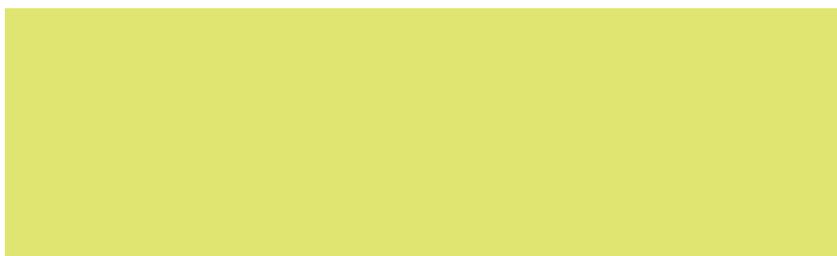
## ▼ DEHYDRATION URINE COLOUR CHART

The following Dehydration Urine Colour Chart will help you use your urine colour as an indicator of your level of dehydration and what actions you should take to help return your body back to a normal level of hydration.



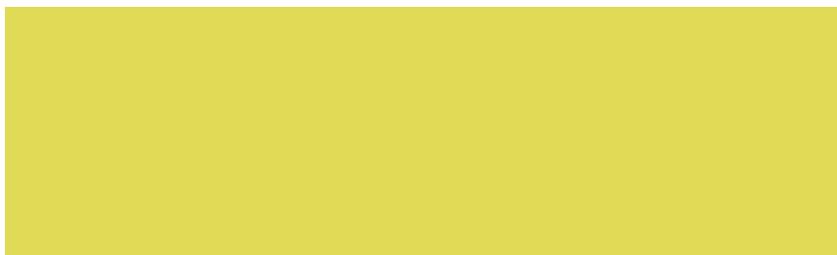
### **ACTION**

Doing ok. You're probably well hydrated. Drink water as normal.



### **ACTION**

You're just fine. You could stand to drink a little water now, maybe a small glass.



### **ACTION**

Drink about half a bottle of water (250ml) within the hour, or drink a whole bottle (500ml) of water if you're outside and/or sweating



### **ACTION**

Drink about half a bottle of water (250ml) right now, or drink a whole bottle (500ml) of water if you're outside and/or sweating



### **ACTION**

Drink two bottles of water (1 litre) right now. If your urine is darker than this and/or red or brown, then dehydration may not be your problem. See a doctor.



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# SECTION 8

## WARMING UP AND COOLING DOWN

### ▼ INTRODUCTION

An essential part of training and competition – warming up and cooling down need to be seen by both coaches and boxers as essential parts of training and competition.

#### Reasons to Warm Up

The physical and mental preparation for training and competition such that performance is maximised and risk of injury is reduced.

#### General Principles

- Start slow – general body movements
- Gently increasing the work rate
- End with dynamic stretch that take limbs through the full range of movement
- Sport specific – make it real
- **FUN AND GAMES FOR YOUNG BOXERS!**

#### R.A.M.P.P.S. Principles

- Raising the heart rate and circulating oxygenated blood
- Activate muscles
- Mobilise joints and skeletal system
- Potentiate and stimulate muscles via dynamic stretching
- Prepare psychologically for the activity
- Sport specific need/rehearsal



## ▼ WARMING UP BEFORE COMPETING

### **Realism in preparation – hitting the pads is not enough!**

Performance will suffer if the boxer goes into a contest 'cold' and the type of warm up is important. Hitting the pads is not enough! The boxer needs to move as well as hit and it's essential that he/she is prepared for rapid movement and for the changes of pace, tempo and angle necessary for top performance. This is especially true if the boxer has been training in a small ring and is confronted by a full sized ring in a championship.

The boxer must be prepared (warmed up) in such a way as to use the space to best advantage, maximise the physical and technical advantages he/she possesses and counter the strengths of the opponent. It's important to make the warm up realistic. The boxer isn't going to be faced with an opponent that stands still and lets themselves be hit. Prepare for the movements that will be required.

## ▼ WARMING UP FOR TRAINING SESSIONS IN THE GYM

### **Getting the most out of sessions**

Warming up in the gym is vital to getting the most out of the training session, and the nature of the session will dictate how the warm up is carried out. Warming up as a preparation for a running programme will differ to some degree from warming up for what the boxer will do before sparring, but all have the same fundamental requirements – getting the body ready for intense work with minimal risk of injury and maximum potential to learn and improve.

### **Physiological Benefits of Warming Up**

- An appropriate warm up will result in: (make this functional, not physiological):
- increased heart rate in preparation for beginning work
- Increased blood flow through active tissues which leads to higher temperatures and increased metabolism
- Increased speed of contraction and relaxation of warmed muscles
- Reduction in pre-workout muscle stiffness through dynamic mobilization
- Better use of oxygen by warmed muscles
- Better quality/fluency of movement from warmed muscles
- Higher temperatures which help nerve transmission and metabolism in muscles
- Specific warm-ups can help motor unit recruitment necessary in intense 'all out' activity
- Increased mental focus on the training and competition
- Enhance quality/fluency of movement from warmed muscles
- Sharpen mental focus on the forthcoming training and competition





## Warm-Up Structure

### These benefits can be achieved by:

- 5-10 minutes of skipping or jogging to raise body temperature, followed by:
- 5-10 minutes of dynamic mobility work (see stretching section), followed by:
- 10 - 15 minutes of boxing specific drills - shadow boxing, footwork drills, leg and upper body mobility drills and hitting drills.

An effective warm-up should prepare body and mind for the forthcoming training or competition. Hitting the pads is not enough and the full benefits can only be achieved through a 10-15 minute warm-up.

To get the most out of training boxers need to be prepared mentally and physically for the forthcoming session. Performance will also suffer if boxers go into a contest 'cold' as they need to move as well as hit, to prepare for rapid movement and for the changes of pace, tempo and angle necessary for top performance. This is especially true if the boxer has been training in a small ring and is confronted by a full sized ring in a championship.

It's important to make warm-ups interesting and ideally fun. For children, warm-ups may appear to be a dull routine that just delays the fun part of the session; you should use fun games to raise the body temperature and increase the heart rate. This can also be a chance to work on the fundamental movement skills.

The internet is a good source of ideas and children themselves may also come up with good ideas for fun warm-ups for example, warm-ups that they use in PE lessons. Even with adult and talented/Elite boxers, try to be innovative and ensure warm-ups are different; this way you bring a fresh feel to the training room and an excitement about what is to follow.

Once the mind is focused and the body temperature raised, the dynamic mobilisation work can begin. Dynamic mobilisation is not slow stretching; sports science research shows that for a dynamic and explosive sport such as boxing, the use of slow 'static' stretches before a workout or competition actually reduces the capacity to release power. It also suggests that it does not reduce the rate of injury. The emphasis in the warm-up should be on controlled movement through increasingly extended ranges of motion.

## REMEMBER

Spend time with young participants on developing fundamental movement and mental skills as well as technical boxing skills; it will pay dividends on participation levels and on the achievement of a boxer's full potential.





## ▼ MOBILITY EXERCISES

### Controlled motion

Exercises should be appropriate to the movements the boxer will be using and should be carried out in a controlled rhythm through an increasingly full range of motion without strain. This does not mean going into the stretched position and then bouncing to get greater range of movement. This will have exactly the opposite result to what is intended.

### Head to foot mobilisation

Simple joint rotations are a good way to start, beginning with the extremities and working down the body finishing with the feet and toes. The exception is the neck. Here circular rotations are not recommended but rather flexion and extension forwards and backwards and side to side.

### Joint mobilisations – the following joints should be mobilised:

- Fingers
- Wrists
- Elbows
- Shoulders
- Trunk and Shoulders
- Hips
- Knees
- Ankles
- Feet and toes

#### Shoulder circles

Raise right shoulder towards right ear then take it backwards, down, forward and then up again to ear in smooth action. Repeat with left shoulder and finish with both shoulders together.



#### Arm circles

Start by standing straight with feet shoulder width apart and arms straight out to sides, so body forms a T. Slowly start by making small circular motions with both arms on either side. After few repetitions of small circles, enlarge circles and do the same amount of reps.



### Side bends

With hands resting on hips, lift trunk up and away from hips and bend smoothly first to one side, then other. Don't lean either forward or backwards. Maintain a slow rhythm, breathing out on sideways bend and in on return.

### Hip circles

Circles: with hands on hips and feet wider than shoulder width apart, rotate hips in clockwise, then anti-clockwise direction.

### Arm swings

With straight back, swing each arm and then both arms together to overhead position and then forward, down and backwards. Try to brush ears with shoulders as arms swing past head.

### Side/front crossover

Swing both arms out to sides, then cross over in front of chest. Aim for rhythmic movement which gradually increases range of movement and fling arms back with force.



### Rotational walking lunges

From standing position with head up and feet slightly wider than shoulder width, keep back leg straight and take a stride forward. Spring back into start position and repeat with other leg. Rotating torso towards rear leg during each move.





## ▼ COOL-DOWN

A cool-down is important to accelerate recovery mentally and physically and ensure that flexibility and mobility are not compromised by the training routine (especially resistance training). It is generally useful to include flexibility training within a cool-down. Boxers with poor flexibility will benefit from training sessions where the sole focus is flexibility.

### Benefits of Cooling Down

#### An appropriate cool-down will:

- Allow the heart rate to recover to its resting rate
- Reduce the level of adrenaline in the blood
- Reduce the potential for 'Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness' (DOMS)
- Aid in the process of reduction of waste products in the blood – including lactic acid

### Cool-Down Structure

#### This cool down can be achieved by:

- 5-10 minutes of jogging, light circuit type exercises, or walking.
- Yoga
- Pilates
- Developmental stretching exercise

## ▼ STATIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL STRETCHES

### Cooling down and improving flexibility

These stretches are for the cool-down phase of training and are also used to increase mobility and range of movement as part of a developmental stretching programme. Stretches will be held for:

- 10 seconds for cool-down purposes.
- 20 seconds to two minutes when the objective is to increase flexibility.

### A vital part of recovery

If these stretches are part of the cool-down they have great benefit in ensuring that flexibility and mobility are not compromised by the nature of the training routine (especially resistance training).

### The importance of developmental stretching

Where the boxer is limited in range of movement it is vital to do developmental stretching to increase it. As an example, it's important to do the squatting movement with the heels flat on the ground but some boxers lack the mobility and flexibility in the ankle joints and achilles tendons to achieve this.

Developmental stretching could remedy this but too often they look for the easy way out and place the heels on a block to make the exercise fit their physical limitation, rather than looking to correct the physical problem.





## ▼ STRETCHING EXERCISES



### Chest Stretch

- Hold the arms out to the sides parallel to the ground with palms facing forward.
- Stretch the arms back as far as possible without pain and discomfort.



### Frame Pectoral Stretch

- Standing up straight place one arm against the frame (or an open doorway) so that the palm is open and the forearm vertical.
- Place the right leg across the left and ease the body away from the frame making sure that the open palm and forearm remain in contact with the frame.
- Repeat with the other arm.



### Biceps Stretch

- Hold the arms out straight to the sides, parallel with the ground and with palms facing forward.
- Rotate the hands so that the palms face to the rear.
- Stretch the arms back as far as possible.



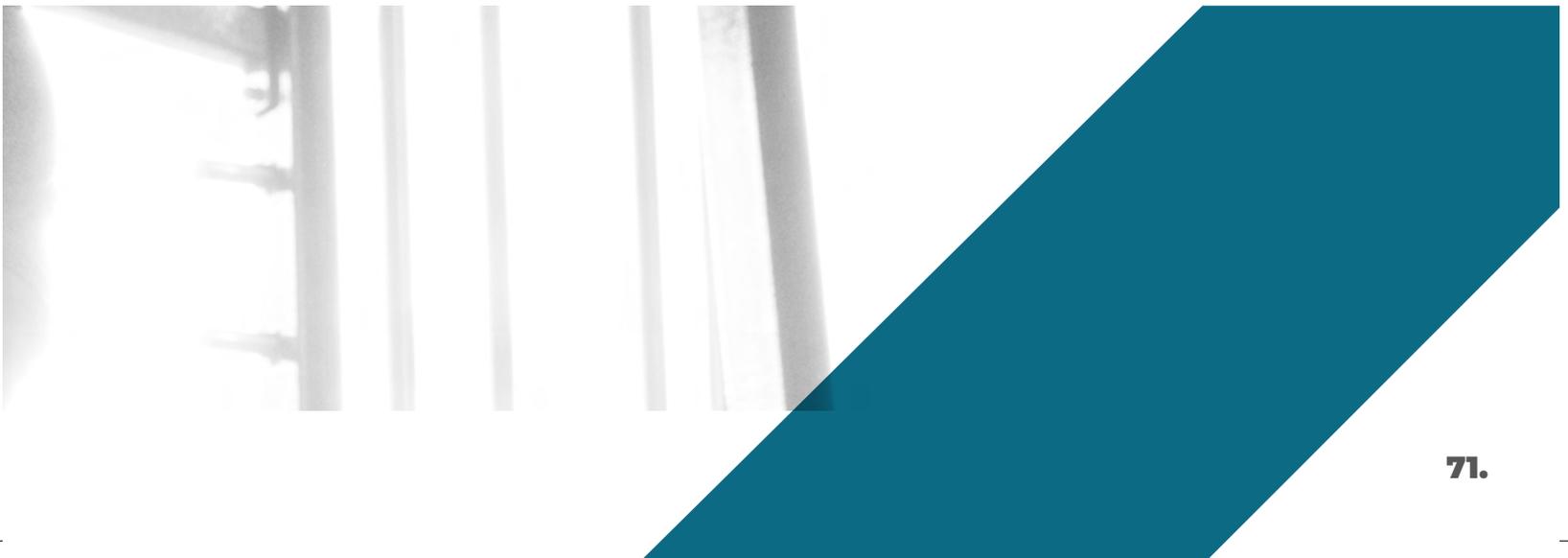
### Upper Back Stretch

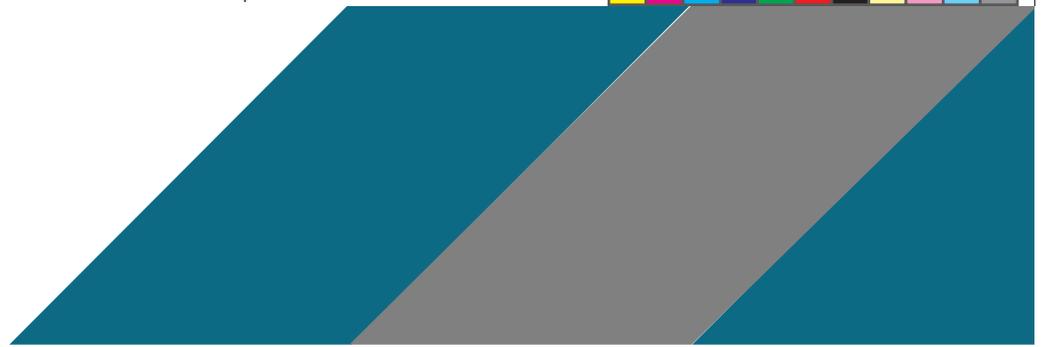
- Interlock the fingers and push the hands as far from the chest as possible, allowing the upper back to relax.



### Shoulder Stretch

- Place the right arm parallel with the ground across the front of the chest.
- Bend the left arm up and use the left forearm to ease the right arm closer to the chest.





### Shoulder and Triceps Stretch

- Place the hands above the head then slide the hands down the middle of the spine.



### Side Bends (torso mobility)

- With hands resting on the hips, bend slowly to one side to the point of tension.
- Come back to the vertical and bend to the other side.
- To increase the sideways leverage place one palm against the side of the head and let the other slide down the opposite leg.



### Hamstring Stretch

- Sit on the ground with both legs straight out in front.
- Bend the left leg and place the sole of the left foot alongside the right knee.
- Allow the left leg to lay relaxed on the ground.
- Bend forward with a straight back.
- Repeat with the other leg.



### Three Point Quadriceps Stretch

- From a standing position bring the left leg back till the instep is resting on a bench.
- Bend the left knee so that the left heel touches the buttocks.
- Now bend the front (right) leg till the thigh is parallel to the ground and the foot is flat on the floor.
- Ease the rear (left) leg back till the knee is pointing straight down and ease the erect torso back.



### Adductor Stretch

- Sit upright on the ground.
- Ease both the feet towards the body and place the soles of the feet together, allowing the knees to come up and out to the sides.
- Resting the hands on the lower legs, ease both legs towards the ground.



### Pike Calf Stretch

- Get into a pike position with the head between the extended arms, the palms on the floor and the rear feet placed on the ground so that the buttocks are elevated.
- Start with the ball of the left foot on the floor with the right instep crossed against the left heel.
- Keeping the left leg as straight as possible lower the left heel till it is flat on the ground.
- Repeat with the right leg.





### Front of Trunk Stretch (Dorsal Raise)

- Lay face down on the ground with the arms fully stretched out.
- Bring the arms to the sides of the shoulders and with the hips firmly pressed into the ground ease the chest off the ground.



### Iliotibial Band Stretch (1)

- Sit upright with the legs stretched out in front.
- Bend the right knee and place the right foot on the ground to the left of the left knee.
- Turn the shoulders to face to the right and use the left hand against the right knee to ease the body further around, and place the right hand on the floor for support.
- Repeat with the other leg.

### Quadriceps Stretch

- Lay face down on the ground with the head resting on the right hand.
- Press the hips firmly into the floor and bring the left foot up towards the buttocks.
- Take hold of the left foot with the left hand and ease the foot closer to the buttocks.
- Repeat with the right leg, resting the forehead on the left hand.





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# SECTION 9

## COACHING BOXING SKILLS

### ▼ PRINCIPLES OF GROUP COACHING

The **IDEA** principle is useful in helping us structure an effective group coaching session.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- Ensure all can see and hear you
- Group usually in a semicircle
- Introduce yourself (if appropriate)
- Allow the boxers to introduce themselves (if appropriate)
- Explain what skills or techniques you will be coaching
- Explain why it is worth learning the skill or technique concerned (sell the skill)
- Show enthusiasm

#### **DEMONSTRATION**

- Give a good demonstration of the skill at full speed and then reduced speed
- Repeat the demonstration so that it can be seen at a range of angles
- If you are not able to demonstrate the skill effectively, use video/DVD/a more able boxer

#### **EXPLANATION**

- Explain the technique or skill by breaking it down in simple steps
- Make key points that will ensure that the group can repeat the technique or skill properly
- Use language appropriate to the group

#### **ACTION**

- Get the group working on the skill
- Give praise for success
- Correct individual faults with the individual concerned
- Correct whole group faults by calling the group back together
- Get feedback from individuals to get their opinions on the skill or technique they are developing
- Challenge any unacceptable behaviour
- Offer encouragement
- Use participants' names
- Make it enjoyable
- As soon as it is appropriate move the learning on and develop the activity

## ▼ BOXING SKILLS

- Good technique is essential if boxers are to enjoy their boxing, develop their potential and achieve their goals.
- Good technique is not necessarily the same as good skill.
- To develop good technique, you will need to use drills but remember that too much emphasis on repetitive drills can become boring and may drive people out of the boxing club and away from the performance pathway.
- There needs to be an appropriate balance of serious drill and purposeful enjoyable activities, particularly for children.

### Coaching of Stance, Guard and Footwork

As a coach, you must be competent and confident in coaching individuals and groups in the correct stance and guard, good footwork and the foundations of coordinated and balanced movement in attack and defence.

## ▼ STANCE

A solid stance is the foundation upon which everything else is built. Without it, boxers will not achieve their potential and you need to be confident in dealing with both orthodox/right handed boxers (left hand as the lead hand) and left handed or southpaw boxers (the right hand is the lead hand).

### Principles of stance

- Good balance is fundamental
- Ability to move quickly in any direction
- Minimise target area
- Width and depth between feet
- Feet at approximately 45 degrees to opponent
- Rear foot heel raised

### Stance

- Trainees to try both styles – orthodox and southpaw i.e. the normal stance for both the right handed and the left handed boxer.
- Ensure good balance and that the rear foot is offset from the front foot and the rear heel slightly raised off the floor
- Demonstrate the need for good balance – get the student to rock to and fro whilst maintaining a good solid base. Demonstrate the value of a solid base by applying pressure to the lead shoulder.

### Common Errors

- Feet in line – or come into line after a front hand and a leftward drift
- Feet too wide, hindering rapid movement
- Feet too narrow, giving a poor base of support
- Back heel flat – hindering fluent movement
- Square on to the opponent – especially when moving right
- Leaving the chin in the air when going both back and forward





## ▼ GUARD

### Key coaching points

- Drop arms to the side and lift at the elbows to protect the chin
- Hands closed but not clenched
- Chin down (let the chin fall forward don't force it down thereby causing tension in the shoulders) – look at the opponent through the eyebrows

**A correct and sound guard position is the cornerstone of good defence and the foundation for effective and efficient punching technique.**

### Principles of guard

- Protect the target area
- Stay relaxed
- Get back to guard position quickly following a punch
- Non-punching hand and arm to stay in the guard position at all times

### Common Errors

- Hands too low exposing the chin
- Hands too high exposing the body
- Elbows out exposing the body
- Failing to get back to a guard position after punching – letting the front hand 'lay' after a jab
- Letting the free hand wander from the guard position while punching



## ▼ FOOTWORK

The fundamental principle of good footwork is that good balance is maintained at all times to move into and out of range and to throw punches from a solid base of support. It's important to avoid the 'concrete feet' phenomenon by developing fluency and rhythm in foot movement and making sure that the rear heel is not rooted to the canvas.

The key elements of footwork are maintaining good width and length between the feet so that the boxer can change distance and direction, especially changing the angle to the opponent, and changing tempo.

Beginners may become too focused on the techniques of punching and lose sight of the fact that effective punching begins with good footwork. Coach your boxers to realise that getting into position with excellent footwork is essential in order to throw successful punches and to use defences effectively.

When working with boxers on the pads, focus on the position of the boxer's feet and not just on the impact of the punches on the pads.

### Principles of footwork

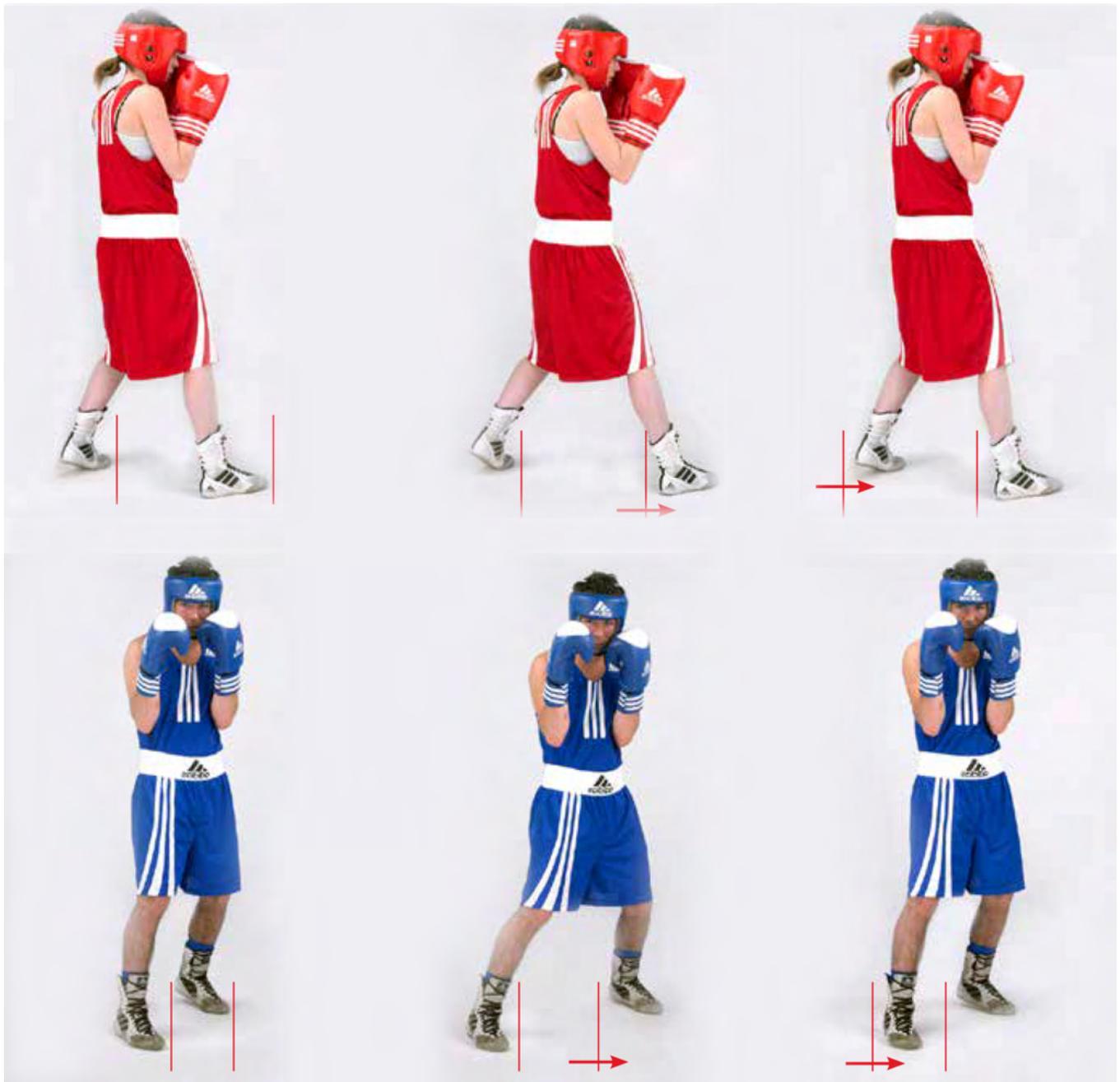
- Being balanced at all times
- Maintaining good length and width of base
- Being able to move effortlessly and quickly

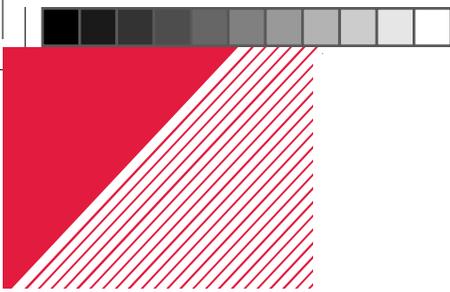
### Key coaching points

- Push against the front foot to move back and the back foot to move forward.
- Make sure to keep the same distance between the feet, maintaining the base, not crossing the legs or bringing the feet together. First move forward and back and then side to side using short, smooth, sliding movements with minimal bounce.
- The **REAL** skill of footwork is in changing direction and tempo!
- On balls of feet, push against front toes to move back and back toes to move forward.
- Feet should move as a unit, ensure same distance is kept between feet, maintaining base, not crossing legs or bringing feet together.
- Move forward and back and then side to side using short, smooth, sliding movements with minimal bounce.
- Use feet to get in range to throw punches.

### Major faults

- Losing the base – narrowing the stance moving back and overextending the stance when throwing a front hand jab.
- Drifting after throwing a sequence of two or more front hands (to the left for the orthodox boxer and to the right for the southpaw).
- Moving too far in one direction – losing 'range'.
- Bringing the front foot back to meet the rear foot – especially when moving back from a bag after throwing a front hand.
- Allowing the feet to come together in moving right (orthodox) and left (southpaw).





## ▼ THE SCORING BLOW

Each hit must, without being blocked or guarded, land directly with the knuckle part of the closed glove with either hand on any part of the front or sides of the head or body, above the belt with force.

### The following are not scoring blows:

- (i) hitting while infringing any of the rules
- (ii) hitting with the side, the heel, the inside of the glove or with the open glove or any part other than the knuckle part of the closed glove
- (iii) blows which land on the arms
- (iv) blows that merely connect, without the weight of the body or shoulder.

## ▼ COACHING PUNCH MECHANICS

- As a level II coach you must be competent and confident in coaching individuals and groups in technique for a full range of punches and defences.
- You should understand and be able to communicate the idea of powerlines (i.e. basic punch mechanics) and the real punch repertoire (i.e. RPR, those punches and simple punch sequences which are actually going to be of use in the contest).
- You need to be able to coach single punches, combinations, switch of attack, counter punches and counter attacks.

### Real punch repertoire (RPR)

These are the planned punches to be used in any contest based on what the boxer can deliver with frequency, with a high success rate, against all styles of opponent and contest situations, without leaving him/herself open to counters.

The RPR for beginners will be quite restricted. Coaching complicated, multi-punch combinations (especially on the pads) to novice boxers who have not yet mastered the basics is ill-advised as the opportunities to use them effectively in a contest simply won't arise.

The novice's judgment of when to use the combinations and the movement and balance which underpin them, are not good enough to provide either the opportunity to use the combinations or a good base of support to complete them.

Coaching complex sequences of punches may make the coach feel good; it doesn't help the novice boxer. Often a lack of variety in punch selection and low success in the contest is not a matter of lack of technique but of poor positioning, tactics and adaptability.

The boxer fails to get the why? when? and where? questions right. Sometimes the 'favoured' punch which looks so devastating on the bags or pads never actually lands in the ring, the arena for which it has been developed.

Perhaps it is telegraphed and the opponent can predict and evade it. Every time it is thrown and fails to connect, the boxer is sent off balance and can't finish a combination or move effectively to defend against the counter. It's therefore not a useful punch in competition, no matter how impressive it looks in training.



## ▼ PRINCIPLES OF PUNCHING

### Punch mechanics

All the major punches have the following principles in common:

- The body 'drives' the punch with rotation around the axis.
- The drive comes from leverage from the floor (from a good base built on a good stance).
- Relaxation of the arm until just before the final moment of impact.
- Snap, acceleration and rotation of the hitting hand, hitting through the target.
- The wrist should be kept straight to prevent injury.
- The boxer should breathe out as the punch is thrown.

### The powerline

It is important from an early stage that boxers understand where power comes from and how it is used in punching:

- The straight punches: drive from the floor, rotate around the central axis, firing a relaxed arm to the target; the powerline is a straight line through the target.
- The bent arm punches (hooks): drive from the floor with a fast rotation of the hips around the central axis, firing a relaxed bent arm to the target; the powerline is an arc through the target.
- The bent arm punches (uppercuts): drive from the floor with an upward surge of the hip and trunk, the arm is driven on a vertical path; the powerline is an upward surge.
- Effective punching is about more than punching technique.
- Success in training doesn't always translate to success in competition.

## ▼ THE MAIN PUNCHES – STRAIGHT

### The jab to the head (straight lead-hand)

#### Key coaching points

- The most important punch in boxing.
- Contests can be won with a good straight lead hand and, together with movement of the feet it is the primary 'range finder' to set up the more powerful rear hand.
- From good base of support and with rapid quarter rotation of hips, extend relaxed arm accelerating through the movement.
- Rotate wrist 90 degrees at last moment before contact with fully extended arm so palm faces floor.
- Keep chin down, looking through eyebrows.

#### Common errors

- No rotation.
- Insufficient extension.
- Not turning the wrist over on at the last moment before contact.
- 'Flicking' the front hand out with no rotation and poor extension.
- Jabbing from a square stance thereby losing range.
- Signalling the punch by 'cocking' the hand in preparation.
- Leaning into the shot and losing the balanced base.
- Letting the front hand 'lay' after the punch – not returning to guard.





## The jab to the body

### Key coaching points

- From the guard position bend the knees.
- With a slight turn of the hip inwards, extend the arm accelerating through the movement.
- Quarter turn of the hips ideal.
- Turning the wrist at the last moment before impact.
- Tuck the chin into the shoulder, keeping the rear hand in a defensive position at the side of the chin.
- Keep the chin down – looking through the eyebrows.
- On contact return the hand to the guard position and unbend the knees, standing up still in the guard position.

### Common errors

(as for jab to the head, plus)

- Not lowering the level and jabbing down.
- Bending at the waist, not the knees and leaning into the opponent's range.



## Rear-hand to the head

### Key coaching points

- In the guard position slight turn of the rear foot.
- A fast twist of the hips generating power through the body from the good base.
- Extend the rear arm, turning the wrist over at the last moment before impact.
- After contact return to the guard position.

### Common errors

- No rotation of the body.
- Failure to extend the arm.
- Not turning the wrist at the last moment before impact.
- Over rotation and punching across the line.
- Losing the rear foot contact with the floor and so losing the base.
- Throwing the body forward towards the opponent and losing balance.
- Not returning the rear hand to the guard position with elbow tucked in.



## Rear-hand to the body

### Key coaching points

- In the guard position, bend the knees and bring the shoulder in line with the target.
- Quarter turn rotation of the rear foot.
- Fast twist of the hips generating power through the body from a good base.
- Extend the rear arm, turning the wrist over just before impact.
- On contact return to the guard position and stand up into the upright guard position.

### Common errors

(as for rear hand to the head, plus)

- Not lowering the level and punching down.
- Bending at the waist, not the knees.
- Dropping rear heel to the floor.
- Lack of rotation of hips and shoulders.





## ▼ THE MAIN PUNCHES – BENT ARM

### Lead-hand hook to the head

#### Key coaching points

- Can be a devastating punch
- In the guard position, slight turn of the front toe and raising of the heel.
- At the same time raise the arm to a 90 degree angle level with the shoulder.
- Rapid rotation of the hips of the hips generating power through the body from a good base and out through the closed fist.
- Keep the eye on the target and the chin protected by the shoulder.
- On contact return the hand to the guard position.
- Teach the same for the long- and short-range hook except that the long-range hook will have an angle of the arm greater than 90 degrees and the short-range hook, less than 90 degrees. Palm position will also change.

#### Common errors

- Telegraphing the punch; punch needs to be thrown from where hand is and not drawn back.
- Stiff shoulders and immobile hips working against the rapid rotation of the body and relaxed hitting arm.
- Arm stiffening early in the arc of the punch.
- Overthrowing causing a loss of the base of support.
- Arm straightening before the arc has been completed.
- Weak legs and hips offering a poor rotational base and inadequately firm 'hinge'.
- Hitting with the inside of the glove; not turning the wrist over just before impact.
- Raising chin leaving it exposed as the punch is thrown.



### Rear-hand Hook (Short and Medium)

#### Key coaching points

- In the guard position, slight turn of the foot (quarter turn).
- A fast rotation of the hips generating power through the body from a good base and out through the closed fist.
- At the same time raise the arm to a 90 degree angle level with the shoulder.
- Keeping the chin protected by the shoulder.
- On contact return the hand to the guard position.
- Teach the same basic principles for the long- and short-range hook except the angle at the elbow joint will be less than 90 for the short and the palm position can change.

#### Common errors

- Telegraphing the punch (especially lead hand hook). The punch needs to be thrown from where the hand is **NOT** drawn back.
- Hitting with the inside of the glove – not turning the wrist over just before impact.
- Pulling out of the arc of the punch – coming back off the punch too soon.
- Overthrowing causing a loss of the base of support.
- Stiff shoulders and immobile hips.
- Weak legs and hips offering a poor rotational base.
- Arm stiffening early in the arc of the punch.
- Arm straightening before the arc has been completed.

## Lead-hand uppercut

### Key coaching points

- Time turn the wrist so the palm faces inwards towards the boxer.
- A slight bend of the knees, extend the front leg and lift the heel off the floor to generate power from the front leg through the hips.
- As the leg extends throw a short punch.
- Keep the forearm vertical and the eyes on the target and the chin protected by the shoulder.
- On contact return the hand to the guard position.
- Coach the short, medium and long range uppercut explaining that the angle of the arm at the elbow is key.

## Rear-hand uppercut

### Key coaching points

- Turn the wrist of the rear hand so the palm faces inwards.
- Slight bend of the rear knee, extend the rear leg to generate power through the rear leg through the hips.
- As the leg extends lift the rear heel off the floor and throw a short punch.
- Keep the eye on the target and the chin protected by the shoulder.
- On contact return the hand to the guard position.

### Common errors

- Losing the 90 degree bend in the arm - early (partial) straightening of the arm.
- Throwing the head back in an attempt to generate power.
- Failing to use the legs and hips to drive up.
- Driving across rather than upwards.
- Winding up to prepare for the shot thereby telegraphing it.





## Combination punching

Having mastered the basic punches, the trainees must move towards throwing punches in sequence (combination punching) in such a way that the punch sequences allow the boxer to finish on balance and in control, in order to have options for movement and change of angle.

### For example:

- Jab – straight rear-hand – lead-hand hook – back to guard
- Feint the jab – straight rear-hand – lead-hand hook – back to guard
- Jab to body – rear-hand to the head – jab to head – back to guard

The trainees should then make up their own combinations, but always thinking 'what next?' i.e. 'If I throw this sequence, where does my transfer of weight take me and can I get back to a balanced stance?' A well executed jab and/or front-hand hook will allow the boxer to maintain the balance from which movement options can be chosen – backwards or to the sides to change the angle.

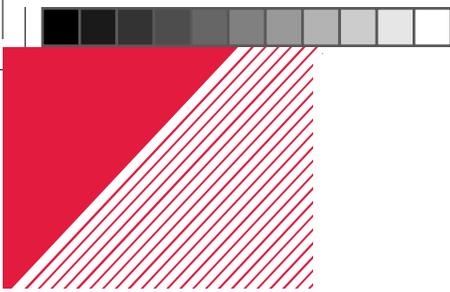
### Common errors

- Throwing the combination as a series of single shots
- Failing to allow the body to 'flow' as one body position sets up the next
- Over-committing to a punch in the middle of a sequence and losing the final 'pay-off' shot (e.g. overhitting a favoured rear-hand and failing to get maximum power into the final shot in the sequence, the front-hand hook)
- Failure to maintain base of support and finishing off balance
- Failure to observe the principle 'throw when you know' i.e. get in position to give a good chance of success and when you 'know' that some (or all) of the combination will get through
- Being too ambitious – forget the 20 punch combos!

## Phasing and linking of attacks

- A combination is a series of punches following quickly on from each other
- A double attack is when a punch or combination is quickly followed by a second punch or combination of punches after a foot movement.
- A multiple attack is much the same with punches or combinations repeatedly linking together coupled with movement of the feet.
- In a two phased attack a punch or combination is followed by a defence and then second punch or combination.
- This strategy of phasing attacks can be built upon to link numerous combinations and defences.
- At the higher levels of competitive boxing this concept of linking punches, combinations and defences is the key to success.





## ▼ DEFENCES

### Principles of defence

- Predicting the likely attack and making good decisions about defensive strategies
- Ensuring that the target area is protected
- Seeking opportunities to counterpunch following a defensive move
- The moving target is much harder for the opponent to hit. **This can be through:**
  1. the feet, taking the boxer in and out of range
  2. the torso, based on a strong core which makes the upper body flexible
  3. changing the level
  4. changing the angle of defence and attack
  5. keeping a strong base of support all the time and providing a launch pad for counters.

## ▼ COACHING DEFENCE

### Head movement:

Is strongly related to upper body flexibility. The skillful defensive boxer can move the head and shoulders in a way that confuses the aim of the opponent, while still keeping both eyes on the opponent to judge distances effectively. (A boxer with one eye damaged can't make these fine judgments of distance and won't be allowed to continue a bout.)

### Creating opportunities for counter attacks:

It's important that defensive moves open up options for counter attack as far as possible. This will usually be because the defensive move transfers the bodyweight in such a way that it's possible to trigger a counter delivered with the power of the body and not just the arm. Defensive moves of the trunk, hands and feet will be well controlled and often small so as not to disturb the balanced stance.

### The importance of lateral movement:

Where possible in defences based on foot movement, it's important to move out of a direct line of attack by lateral movement, rather than always working in predictable straight lines.

### A good range of defences is key:

Effective defence, like successful attack, is unpredictable, and as the boxer's skills develop beyond the basic moves which follow in this section, defences involving foot and body movement will involve feinting, disguise and changes of angle in order to set up effective attacks.





## ▼ A SELECTION OF DEFENCES

We usually talk of three groups of defence: **hand, foot and trunk**

### Hand defences

- Block to the lead hand
- Outside parry to lead-hand to the head
- Outside parry to the lead-hand to the body
- Elbow block to the jab to the body

### Trunk defences

- Duck
- Push away
- Lay back
- Slip outside

### Foot defences

- Push away
- Step outside

## ▼ CONCLUSION

The punches and defences listed are just an introduction. Boxing is the ultimate 'open skill' sport where decisions are made in an instant, and the selection of punches and defences needs to be almost automatic according to how the boxer reads the situation in the ring. All the coach can do is to ensure that the basic skills are in place and that the boxer has a range of options with which to answer the demands of the match.







## SECTION 10

### BOXING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Amateur boxing and the training which goes with it, provide great opportunities for children and young people to learn skills, get fitter and learn about themselves in one of the most challenging and rewarding of all sports. It's the responsibility of the coach and of England Boxing to ensure that the welfare of the young person isn't put at risk during this process of discovery. It's a contact sport after all.

Some young people who start in the local club will go on to achieve excellence and national, or even international, recognition, but it's obvious that most children who come along will not become champions and it's the club's responsibility to help them become the best they can be.

#### ▼ EVERY CHILD MATTERS

The keynote statement from government which underpins the England Boxing approach to the development of the sport with young people is 'Every Child Matters'. The elements are:

**BE HEALTHY**  
**STAY SAFE**  
**ENJOY AND ACHIEVE**  
**MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION**  
**ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING**

#### ▼ EQUITY

England Boxing has committed itself to the following statement and is fully committed to making the 'Equality Standard' a cornerstone of its work.

**"No participant, volunteer, job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, religion or sexual preference."**

#### ▼ WHY ARE THEY HERE?

It is important that the coach finds out why the young people, as individuals, have joined the club. It might be for some or a combination of any of the following reasons but it's vital that the young person wants to be there.

- For enjoyment and fun (LTAD FUNDamentals)
- To learn skills and develop fitness (LTAD Learning to Train and Training to Train)
- To compete and to win recognition through rewards, titles and trophies (LTAD Training to Compete and Training to Win)
- For social reasons, perhaps to build self confidence and to be with friends
- To please others, especially parents



## ▼ **BALANCING TRAINING AND COMPETITION**

That the sport offers a variety of competitive opportunities to young people in their early teens is of crucial importance. The balance of fitness training, skill learning and competition is an individual matter and the art of coaching is matching the learning process to the needs of the individual. What suits one young person will probably not suit another in quite the same way.

Young people can't compete in England Boxing sanctioned competition until they are 10 and as they go through the Fundamentals stage and move into 'Learning to Train' and 'Training to Train' (i.e. up until 15 for girls and 16 for boys) it's essential that the coach and the club work out what sort of competition (and how much of it) is going to be appropriate to that unique individual.

## ▼ **DEFINING SUCCESS**

Success for the really talented may be in the form of regional and national titles, but for the majority it may be in an overall winning record against carefully matched opponents.

For some, the risks of being drawn against opponents who are too skilful and too strong in a championship, make their participation in an open competition inappropriate, and boxing for them will revolve around local shows with sensitive matching against clubs who can be trusted to take a similar 'child centred' view.

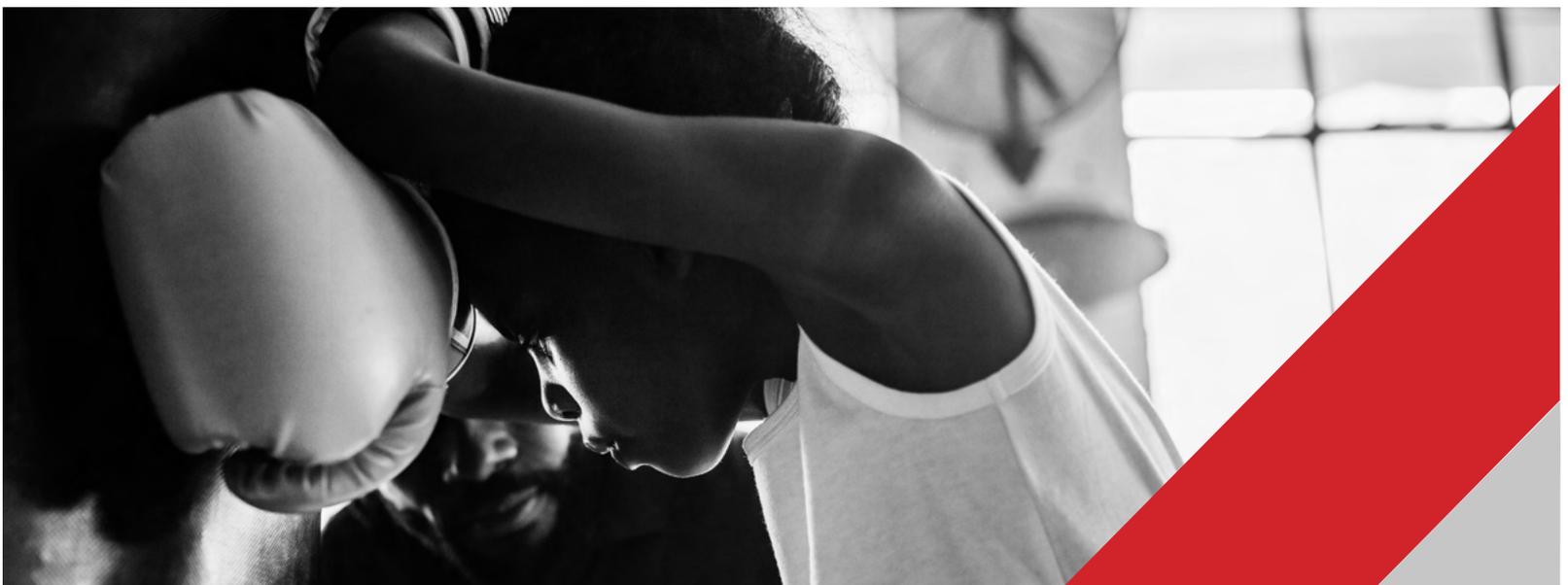
Coaches should put the emphasis on success in training and skill development – not just on winning. Even in competition it's important to emphasise the performance and not just the result. With many young people it pays to take the 'long view', where the slower process of maturation and development may mean that a lack of early competitive success is a poor predictor of ultimate achievement.

Success means achieving more than you did last time, showing that you have learned the things that have been practised in the gym and thereby reaching personal goals which might be about skill and or fitness development rather than 'getting the decision'.

In the case of some social programmes with marginalised young people at risk of exclusion, success may be defined as turning up more consistently and on time for training, showing better concentration while in the gym and building up relationships with the coaches and fellow boxers. The actual skill learning may be less important.

## ▼ **DEALING WITH SUCCESS AND FAILURE**

Learning how to lose gracefully may be as big a life lesson as learning how to win, graciously. It's a key role for the coach to be able to support the young person through adversity, as well as to develop the habits of good sportsmanship which make the winner a good role model. The posturing and 'trash talking' which promoters use to sell the business of professional boxing have no place in the amateur sport.





## ▼ THE ROLE OF THE PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Coaches need to be aware of the parent's motives as well as the young person's, as they will affect the child's training and degree of focus and the regularity (and enthusiasm) with which they come to the club. Ultimately, if they only come because they are brought there, can't tell the parent that they don't want to box and manifestly don't enjoy sparring, they mustn't be forced into competition just so the club can boast of the number of juniors it has on its books and the parent can boast of his son/daughter 'the boxer'.

It's also clear that for the great majority of children and young people, their experience in the family and with friends outside the club will be critical in whether they make the sort of progress which their talent suggests they should. They are only in the club a very small proportion of their lives. Outside influence may well be far more powerful than the coach can exert.

Where this influence extends to technique, skill learning and boxing style and the parent and coach are in agreement so much the better, but there will certainly be occasions where this is not so and ultimately the club has to back the judgement of its coaches.

Parental influence may well be a particular issue in terms of nutrition. If the parents are not aware of (and committed to) principles of healthy eating, it's unrealistic to expect the young person to follow the sort of diet which we can demand of an Elite performer in a national squad.

## ▼ WHAT MOTIVATES THE YOUNG PERSON?

The motivation which causes the young person to stay with the club and learn the skills of boxing (and become fit enough to use them in contests) is a very individual matter. Some general motivators, however, are obvious:

- Feeling successful. Everyone in the session or the season needs to feel that they have succeeded – even in a small way. This leads to an increase in confidence.
- Mastering skills. Young people enjoy mastering skills and feeling increasingly competent and 'in control'.
- What is new and exciting in a place where they feel safe and secure. The coach can provide the child the opportunity to enjoy new and exciting experiences and will provide the supportive environment for them to do so.
- To be active - children often prefer to be 'doing' rather than thinking.
- Consistent recognition of their abilities and their success.
- Realistic feedback. Setting targets which are realistic, challenging but not out of reach. Honesty is vital.

These are just a few general principles and each child will respond differently depending on their personality, aptitude and the background from which they come. There is now a body of research which sets out the '**FIVE Cs**' – general principles which guide the development of the young person and they all apply very well to learning a sport.

**BUILDING  
CONFIDENCE**

**DEVELOPING  
COMPETENCE**

**MAKING  
CONNECTIONS**

**LEARNING TO  
BE CARING**

**DEVELOPING  
CHARACTER**

The well managed club and good coaches can give the young person the opportunity to experience all of the five 'Cs'.

Remember, the children will remain in the sport longer if the coach and the club give them what they need and allow them to become the best they can be. They can combine personal achievement with belonging to a supportive team of clubmates and coaches.





## ▼ RUNNING SESSIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

### Principles of Practice

- The session is introduced with **clear objectives**.
- The objectives are set out in clear **order of priority**.
- The objectives are **communicated** clearly before the session starts.
- The session **builds on the success** of what has gone before.
- The increase in difficulty between two practices which are **progressive** and which are linked together should be as small as possible while still remaining motivating.
- The practices should be '**boxer centred**'. All the practices should be designed to help the young people develop awareness of their own performance and the outcomes in terms of what effects they have.
- It's important that practices should be designed so that they **bring about the desired effect easily and simply**. It should be obvious to the child whether they are succeeding or not without a great deal of verbal feedback from the coach.
- All the practices should reflect what is contained in **the skill as a whole**. The parts which are practiced need to obviously relate back to the whole skill.
- Enough time should be spent on **allowing the young people to succeed** in the practice which has been set but the session is not like a convoy – proceeding at the pace of the slowest ship. The enthusiasm of the talented must not be sacrificed on the altar of helping the weakest and slowest.

### Rest and Recovery

**Tiredness plays no part in skill learning!** The young people who are being coached to learn a technique or pattern of skill should have the chance to rest once they start to feel tired since what is being looked for here is skill development not fitness development.

- It is important that the trainees are practicing good form on the basis of little and often. This means that young boxers are probably not going to work to three minute round times. Don't be a slave to the gym timer!
- No 'pressure training.' Training for fitness within skill learning is a late stage of skill development and only for experienced boxers. It doesn't have a part to play in coaching the young.
- Appropriate feedback. The feedback given by the coach should relate directly to what the practice is all about and to its specific objectives but the use of encouragement is far more likely to be effective than negative feedback.
- Practice not repetition. Repetition which is mindless, unrealistic and which lacks focus is only going to lead to poor technique being drilled in and a breakdown in skill with increasing tiredness. Practice does **NOT** necessarily make things perfect. Inappropriate or bad practice may very well make things worse.
- Quality not quantity should be the basic principle for the young boxer in training.





### **Fun**

In order to ensure that the sessions are fun and the young people get plenty of enjoyment from being involved, it's important that the coach uses games in skill learning and in fitness development. These games may be competitive, they may be organised in grids but all of them should be introduced and managed with a sense of humour.

### **Variety**

There needs to be variety in the various training programmes both in terms of their content and the themes which they cover. It's important that the coach invents new activities from time to time. Be innovative, surprise them, borrow from other coaches.

### **Skill**

Skill Learning should form the greatest percentage of the sessions and the skills should be learned through games and individually focused activities. It's important that the coach encourages the young boxer to show flare and self expression.

### **Individual**

It's absolutely essential that the individual needs and the personality of the boxer are well known to the coach, since only by knowing details of individual personality will it be possible to help the young boxer deal with success and failure.

### **Fitness**

It is important that fitness development should be built around game activity, often in the form of team games. The focus should be on aerobic activity and where resistance is used it should be the resistance of the young boxer's own body weight. **It's important for the coach to remember that fitness should be a platform for skill not a replacement!**

## ▼ TRAINING GUIDE

### Remember every session should have:

- (1) An interesting start
- (2) A challenging middle
- (3) An enjoyable finish

AGE OF THE CHILD/ YOUNG PERSON	NUMBER OF SESSIONS PER WEEK	SESSION LENGTH	TYPE OR EMPHASIS
10/11	1	1 Hour maximum	Non-contact incentive award scheme
11/15	2	1 Hour approximate	As above plus skill bouts
15 +	2 - 3	1¼ Hours approximate	As above plus competitive bouts

## ▼ CONCLUSION: EVERY CHILD MATTERS

It's important that the coach shows interest in the person as well as the boxer. The young boxers have lives outside the gym after all and what happens there has a profound effect on what happens in the club. The coach needs to be aware of their outside lives but **NOT** to interfere in a way which runs counter to the ABAE Safeguarding Children policy.

It's important when dealing with young children and the developing adolescent in the boxing club that hurt should be minimised (in so far as it can be in any contact sport), that there is not too much early specialisation and that other interests are encouraged.

It's the responsibility of the coach to ensure that the sparring is controlled, appropriately matched and graded and that the emphasis is on skill learning through technical and conditioned sparring, leading to a well resourced skill bout programme before full scale competition is undertaken.

Lastly, boxing for children in a youth work context can be an end in itself if the child is not sufficiently motivated or talented to go on to box as an intermediate or a senior. Nevertheless, if the talent is there and the motivation is present, everything that is learned as a child and young person can be seen as an apprenticeship for the senior boxer.

It's the responsibility of the coach to ensure that the talented boxer isn't disadvantaged at a later date by bad habits learned at the formative stages. Coaches who work predominantly with young people and are expert at teaching both boxing and life skills are the cornerstone of the sport. Those who work with Elite squads may have more public profile, but the club coach who starts the beginners off with good skills and a good attitude is responsible for the long-term future of the sport.







# SECTION 11

## EFFECTIVE USE OF PUNCHBAGS AND OTHER HITTING EQUIPMENT

Punchbags are prevalent in all boxing gyms. However they are not often used to their full effect. They have their place but it is vital that the coach controls and supervises their use.

The punchbag is the place where faults in technique are so easily 'grooved' in to bad habits. Correct punching and footwork is essential at all times. They are gym fillers and time fillers. They have their place but the coach needs to be certain why they are being used.

### Benefits Of Punchbags And Hitting Equipment

- Strength
- Cardio respiratory endurance
- Muscular endurance
- Hand, eye and foot coordination
- Punching technique and power

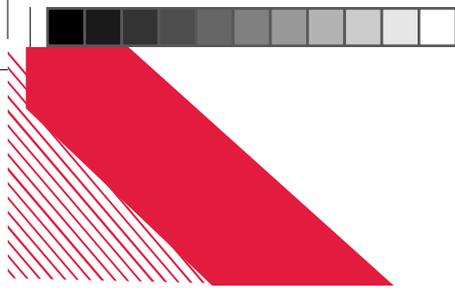
### Safety And Risk Assessment

The coach should check all hitting equipment prior to use. Flying hooks and D-rings can hit the eye. A heavy bag can fall and break bones. Hard spots on punchbags can cause hand damage.

- Are the hanging chains secured?
- Are rubber straps split or aged?
- Are hanging brackets solid and securely fixed?
- Do punchbags have any spots which are too hard to punch safely?

### Variety – the spice of life!

Variety in the type of hitting equipment used will avoid boredom and maintain interest for the boxer. It is good practice in a punchbag session to encourage the boxers to move to a different punchbag after each round. The following sections illustrate some of the hitting equipment available and highlight benefits and possible drawbacks.



## ▼ TYPES OF PUNCHBAGS AND OTHER HITTING EQUIPMENT

### 3 in 1 Bag

Useful for working on straight punches, uppercuts and hooks to both head and body. The weight and elastic securing of the bottom simulate the feel of hitting an opponent well. The disadvantage is that they need to be set to a correct height to suit the stature of the boxer for maximum benefit.

### Floor to Ceiling Ball

These are excellent pieces of equipment for developing hand and eye coordination and for improving reflexes and timing. However, boxers tend not to move their feet as they use them and so over use can stifle footwork as boxers tend to be so static when using them. They also need to be set to a height to suit the stature of the boxer.

### Straight Punchbags

These bags tend to be cheap and readily available. They suit a range of boxers in terms of height and stature. They are best suited for focusing on straight punches and footwork. They have no real value in terms of uppercuts and they have a tendency to encourage boxers to throw lead-hand hooks with the thumb up.

### Angle Bags

These bags have similar uses as straight bags but have the added benefit of being the correct shape for uppercuts and angled hooks.

### Maize Balls

These punch bags are excellent for developing hooks and uppercuts. Conversely, boxers tend to neglect straight punching when using them. The swinging action has some benefit for developing timing and distance judgement.

### Wall Pads

Despite their static nature, wall pads are good for developing in-and-out footwork and changes of angle of attack. The full range of punches can be developed on them. Ideally they need to be raised or lowered to suit the height of the boxers using them.

### Speed Balls

Whilst popular with many boxers, speedballs have questionable value in the amateur boxing gym. When using them footwork is non-existent and the punching techniques used bare little relation to those used in competition. Hand and eye coordination can perhaps be improved and the proficient use of a speedball may perhaps develop the confidence and self esteem of a boxer.





## ▼ HITTING EQUIPMENT PROBLEMS

The effective coach needs to closely supervise the use of all hitting equipment.

### **Beware of the following problems:**

- Boxers lying on or leaning on the equipment
- Static feet
- Overuse of hooks and uppercuts
- Unrealistically long combinations followed by long rests
- Poor punching technique
- Lack of regard for defence particularly low hands
- Footwork all in one direction, constant circling in a clockwise or anticlockwise direction
- Lack of effort
- Lack of focus and intensity

## ▼ COACHING THE USE OF PUNCHBAGS

The use of punchbags needs to be coached and demonstrated.

### **The following guidelines will support the coach.**

- Explain why each piece of equipment is used and its benefits.
- Provide an effective demonstration of effective use.
- Do not allow novices to hit punchbags unless they have had some basic coaching in punching technique.
- The longer the round the more likely a decline in technique will be seen. Keep round times low for beginners.
- Ensure that the boxer retains an opponent 'in the mind's eye'. This will ensure that they maintain focus when using equipment.

## ▼ ORGANISING HITTING EQUIPMENT SESSIONS

Hitting equipment sessions need to be organised if they are to be of significant benefit to the boxer. The following guidelines should enable the coach to plan effective sessions.

### **Theme the rounds**

#### **There are many strategies for themes for each round of hitting equipment work. They include:**

- 1.** Suggest a different type of opponent for the 'mind's eye' to see: Southpaw, counterpuncher, strong left hooker, swinger etc.
- 2.** Specify punches/combinations/footwork used: The number of punches in a combination, the type of punch thrown, the order of punches thrown. Examples:
  - a) Three punch combinations only
  - b) Each combination includes a left hook to the body
  - c) Must push out the punch in between combinations
  - d) 90 degree angle change between combinations
  - e) Every 4th punch must be to the body
- 3.** Tempo change during the round: 1 = steady, 2 = increased pace, 3 = Maximum work rate

### **Duration**

In general, hitting equipment sessions should mimic the timings of competition. For example, the open class senior would usually work three minute rounds for three rounds (with perhaps a fourth round as overload). The schoolboy boxer would normally work for three, one and a half minute rounds with perhaps a fourth round as overload) In most cases the gap between rounds should be one minute.

If hitting equipment is being used with an interval approach then round times could drop to one minute with thirty seconds recovery or perhaps even to just thirty seconds with recovery times of just fifteen seconds. The number of rounds would depend on the fitness level of the boxer.

Unfortunately, in many clubs it is commonplace for punchbag work to form the core of training with amateur boxers working for round after round 'on the bags'. This is poor coaching practice.





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## SECTION 12

### THE COMPONENTS OF FITNESS AND PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING

Fitness can be classified in four main components: strength, speed, stamina and flexibility. However, exercise sports scientists have identified nine components that comprise the definition of fitness:

#### **Strength**

The extent to which muscles can exert force by contracting against resistance (e.g. holding or restraining an object or person).

#### **Power**

The ability to exert maximum muscular contraction instantly in an explosive burst of movements. The two components of power are strength and speed (e.g. jumping or a sprint start).

#### **Agility**

The ability to perform a series of explosive power movements in rapid succession in opposing directions (e.g. zigzag running or cutting movements).

#### **Balance**

The ability to control the body's position, either stationary (e.g. a handstand) or while moving (e.g. a gymnastics stunt).

#### **Flexibility**

The ability to achieve an extended range of motion without being impeded by excess tissue, i.e. fat or muscle (e.g. executing a leg split).

#### **Local Muscle Endurance**

A single muscle's ability to perform sustained work (e.g. rowing or cycling).

#### **Cardiovascular Endurance**

The heart's ability to deliver blood to working muscles and their ability to use it (e.g. running long distances).

#### **Strength Endurance**

A muscle's ability to perform a maximum contraction time after time (e.g. continuous explosive rebounding through an entire basketball game).

#### **Coordination**

The ability to integrate the above listed components so that effective movements are achieved.

Of all the nine elements of fitness, cardiac respiratory qualities are perhaps the most important to develop as they enhance all the other components of the conditioning equation. In terms of international success, all of them are vital for the boxer.



## ▼ PHYSICAL FITNESS

Physical fitness refers to the capacity of an athlete to meet the varied physical demands of their sport without reducing the athlete to a fatigued state. Sports science practitioners would take account of fitness for a specific sport. A boxer, a sumo wrestler and a marathon runner would all have very different levels of emphasis on the various aspects of fitness.

### Improving condition

The coach should identify the most important fitness components for success for a given boxer and then design specific conditioning and training programs that will enhance these fitness components and energy systems.

### Principles of training

Training to improve a boxer's performance obeys the principles of training:

#### To train effectively we must adopt the following:

1. **Specificity:** Tailored to the sport and the individual
2. **Progression:** Improvement over time
3. **Overload:** Appropriate workloads for the time period
4. **Reversibility:** If we stop training benefits are quickly lost
5. **Tedium:** Without variety in the programme athletes can become bored and stale

### We can better understand 'Overload' with F.I.T.T.A.

**Frequency:** How often we train.

**Intensity:** How hard our sessions are.

**Time:** How long our sessions are.

**Type:** What we include in our sessions.

**Adherence:** Sticking rigorously to the plan

### Adaptation

The body will react to the training loads imposed by increasing its ability to cope with those loads. Adaptation occurs during the recovery period after the training session is completed.

If exercises lasting less than 10 seconds (ATP-CP energy system) are repeated with a full recovery (approximately three to five minutes), then an adaptation occurs in which stores of ATP and CP in the muscles are increased. This means more energy is available more rapidly and increases the maximum peak power output. If overloads are experienced for periods of up to 60 seconds, with a full recovery, it is found that glycogen stores are enhanced.

### Reversibility or de-training

Improved ranges of movement can be achieved and maintained by regular use of mobility exercises. If a boxer ceases mobility training, his/her ranges of movement will decline over time to those maintained by his/her other physical activities.

When training ceases the training effect will also stop. It gradually reduces at approximately one third of the rate of acquisition. Boxers must ensure that they continue strength training throughout the competition season, although at a reduced volume, or newly acquired strength will be lost.

### De-training risk for boxers

The effects of a long period of inactivity on physical fitness comes from a UK case study of an Olympic rower, who took more than 20 weeks to fully recover his fitness after an eight week lay-off.

Although the athlete in question took the time off in response to the need for a physical and mental break, rather than because of illness and injury, this case study has clear implications for injured boxers.

It is recommended that training programmes should limit periods of complete inactivity to no more than two to three weeks. Prolonged periods of inactivity should be avoided and the training programme should incorporate some form of maintenance training where a prolonged break is desired.









# SECTION 13

## FITNESS TESTING

Before commencing fitness tests it is important to gain some health related information from participants to identify any potential health risks:

**HAS A DOCTOR EVER DIAGNOSED YOU WITH A HEART CONDITION?**

**HAVE YOU RECENTLY HAD CHEST PAINS DURING OR AFTER EXERCISE?**

**DO YOU EVER FEEL FAINT OR HAVE SPELLS OF SEVERE DIZZINESS?**

**ARE YOU CURRENTLY RECEIVING TREATMENT OR MEDICATION FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?**

**HAVE YOU BROKEN A BONE IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS?**

**DO YOU SUFFER FROM EPILEPSY OR CHRONIC ASTHMA?**

SECTION 13

## ▼ BENEFITS OF FITNESS TESTING

- Get a 'baseline'
- Compare results with others
- Identify strengths and weaknesses and set targets
- Monitor progress
- Provide incentives
- Identify talent



**TO ENSURE RESULTS ARE VALID USE THE FOLLOWING PROTOCOLS:**

- Test at the same time of day every time you test.
- Keep equipment identical.
- Do not test if the participant has an injury or illness.
- Conditions underfoot should be consistently the same.
- Ensure that participants are warmed up and ready.

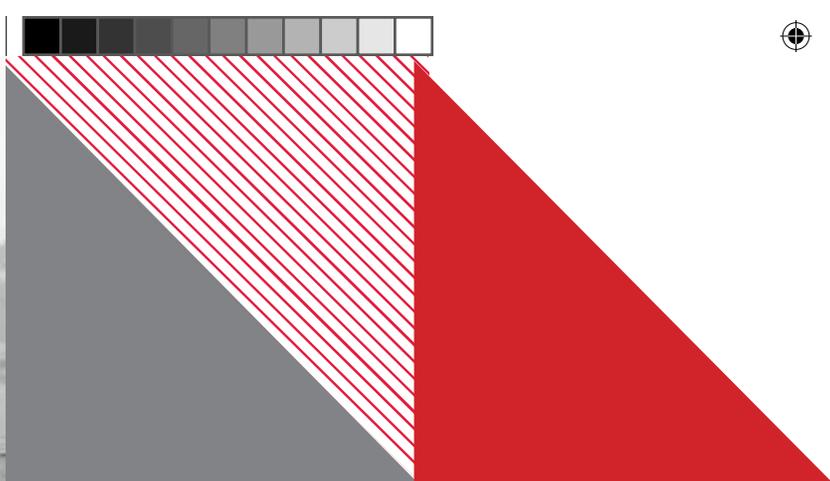
**▼ THE COOPER RUN**

- Tests cardiorespiratory fitness.
- The test involves running around a track.
- The assistant gives the command “GO”, starts the stopwatch and the athlete commences the test.
- The assistant keeps the athlete informed of the remaining time at the end of each lap (100-400M).
- The assistant blows the whistle when the 12 minutes has elapsed and records the distance the athlete covered to the nearest 10 metres.
- Results are compared to normative data.

**▼ THE MULTISTAGE FITNESS TEST (BLEEP TEST)**

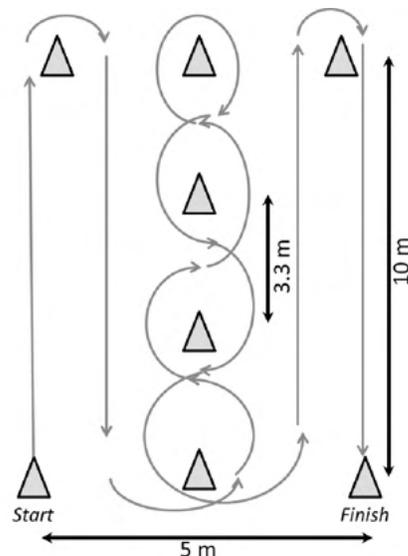
- Tests cardiorespiratory fitness
- This test involves continuous running between two lines 20m apart in time to recorded beeps. For this reason the test is also often called the ‘beep’ or ‘bleep’ test.
- The participants stand behind one of the lines facing the second line, and begin running when instructed by the recording. The speed at the start is quite slow. The subject continues running between the two lines, turning when signalled by the recorded beeps.
- After about one minute, a sound indicates an increase in speed, and the beeps will be closer together. This continues each minute (level). If the line is reached before the beep sounds, the subject must wait until the beep sounds before continuing. If the line is not reached before the beep sounds, the subject is given a warning and must continue to run to the line, then turn and try to catch up with the pace within two more beeps.
- The test is stopped if the subject fails to reach the line (within two metres) for two consecutive ends after a warning.
- Record score and compare to normative data.





## ▼ ILLINOIS AGILITY RUN

- Tests general agility
- Start by lying on your front with your head just behind the start line
- Sprint the route shown in the diagram pictured
- Compare time to normative data



## ▼ JUMP TEST

- Tests leg muscle power
- Stand with feet together, sideways onto the wall/board
- Place chalk on fingers and mark standing height on jump board (arm extended above head)
- Jump and mark board at top of jump
- Repeat three times
- Compare best score to normative data

## ▼ SIT AND REACH TEST

- Test general flexibility (hamstrings have greatest influence)
- Remove shoes
- Using sit and reach box, sit with legs straight and feet flat against box
- Reach as far forward and hold position (legs remaining flat to the floor)
- Compare score to normative data







# SECTION 14

## COACHING FEMALE ATHLETES

Many would argue that most of the coaching principles covered in this seminar should apply equally to male athletes!

**This section was developed in conjunction with  
The Womens Sport and Fitness Foundation and UK Coaching**

### ▼ HOW FAR HAVE WE COME?

#### **Female boxing in England only started in 1998**

- Female bouts are commonplace
- Female boxing an established part of Olympic programme
- Regular squad training at regional and national level
- Full-time female athletes in the GB boxing set up
- Unusual to find a club that does not have female boxers
- The right of females to take part in boxing is never questioned

### ▼ WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGICALLY UNIQUE ABOUT FEMALES?

More than 99% of male and female genetic coding is exactly the same. But that percentage difference influences every single cell in our bodies – from the nerves that register pleasure and pain to the neurons that transmit perception, thoughts, feelings and emotions.

**Brizendine, 2007**



## ▼ DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MALE AND FEMALE BRAIN

**There are two main differences between the male and female brain:**

### **1 Brain structure and function.**

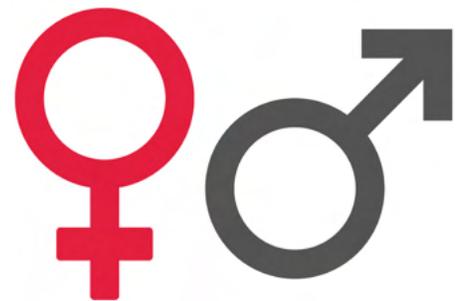
Certain features of the female brain's architecture are vastly different to those of a male's white and grey matter. These can be differences in shape, size, or allocation of functions to different brain areas.

### **2 Brain chemistry.**

The female brain is so deeply affected by hormones that their influence can be said to create a woman's reality. They can shape a woman's values and desires, and tell her, day to day, what's important. A woman's neurological reality is not as constant as a man's.

### **We generalise, but, this CAN mean:**

- The female brain has a higher level of sensitivity to stress and conflict.
- Women use different areas of the brain to solve problems, process language or experience and store strong emotions.
- The brain centres for language, hearing, emotion and memory formation are bigger in women.
- Men have larger processors in the more primitive areas of the brain that register fear and trigger aggression compared to women.
- In the main, women have outstanding verbal agility, an ability to connect deeply in friendship and an almost psychic capacity to read faces and tone of voice. As a coach, you have to ensure you get to know your athletes and tailor your interaction with them to suit their specific needs.



## ▼ WHAT IS THE 'FEMALE ATHLETE TRIAD'?

Sports and exercise are part of a balanced, healthy lifestyle. People who play sports are healthier; get better grades; are less likely to experience depression; and use alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs less frequently than people who aren't athletes. But for some girls, not balancing the needs of their bodies and their sports can have major consequences. Some girls who play sports or exercise intensely are at risk for a problem called female athlete triad. Female athlete triad is a combination of three conditions: disordered eating, amenorrhea, and osteoporosis. A female athlete can have one, two, or all three parts of the triad.

### 1. Disordered Eating

Most girls with female athlete triad try to lose weight as a way to improve their athletic performance. The disordered eating that accompanies female athlete triad can mean that not enough calories are eaten to keep up with energy demands. There is huge potential for this issue in boxing. The restriction of three weight categories for females in Olympic boxing is of particular concern.

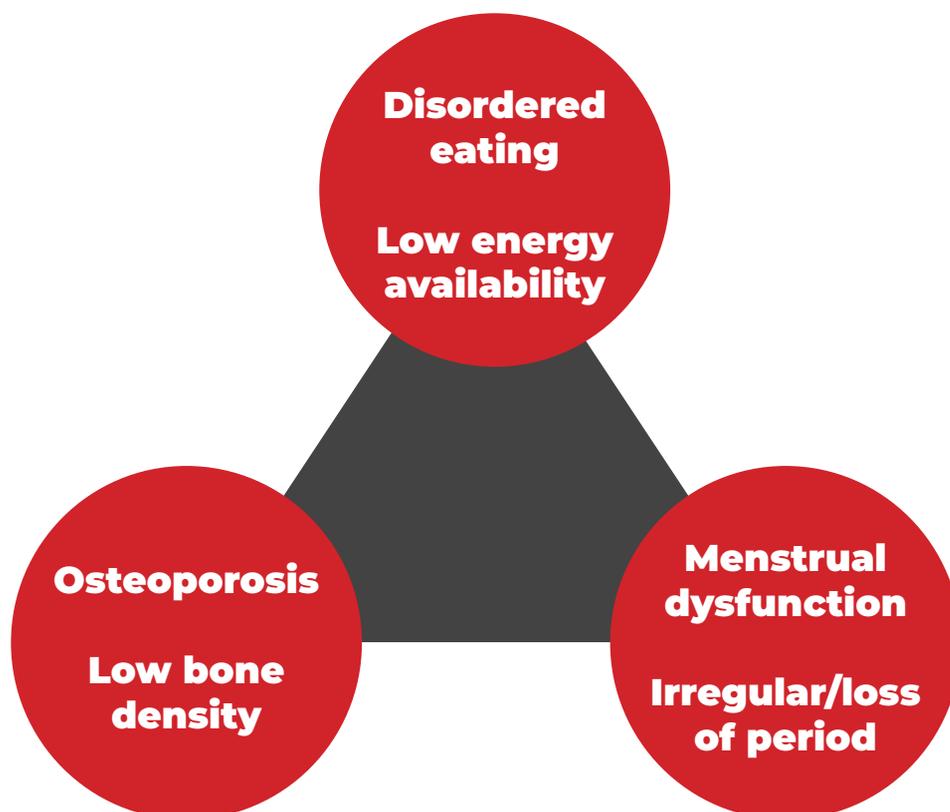
### 2. Amenorrhea

Exercising intensely and not eating enough calories can lead to decreases in the hormones that help regulate the menstrual cycle. As a result, a girl's periods may become irregular or stop altogether. Of course, it's normal for teenagers to occasionally miss periods, especially in the first year. A missed period does not automatically mean female athlete triad. It could mean something else is going on, like pregnancy or a medical condition. Some girls who participate intensely in sports may never even get their first period because they've been training so hard. Others may have had periods, but once they increase their training and change their eating habits, their periods may stop. Discussing such issues for a male coach and female athlete can be particularly difficult. This highlights the importance of recruiting more female coaches in to the sport

### 3. Osteoporosis

Oestrogen is lower in girls with female athlete triad. Low oestrogen levels and poor nutrition, especially low calcium intake, can lead to osteoporosis, the third aspect of the triad. Osteoporosis is a weakening of the bones due to the loss of bone density and improper bone formation. This condition can ruin a female boxer's career because it may lead to stress fractures and other injuries.

Usually, the teen years are a time when girls should be building up their bone mass to their highest levels — called peak bone mass. Not getting enough calcium now can also have a lasting effect on how strong a woman's bones are later in life.



## Who gets female athlete triad?

Many girls have concerns about the size and shape of their bodies. But being a highly competitive athlete and participating in a sport that requires you to train extra hard and 'make weight' can increase that worry.

Girls with female athlete triad often care so much about their sports that they would do almost anything to improve their performance. Boxing is a sport with cause for concern.

In addition, for some competitive female athletes, problems such as low self-esteem, a tendency toward perfectionism, and family stress, place them at risk for disordered eating.

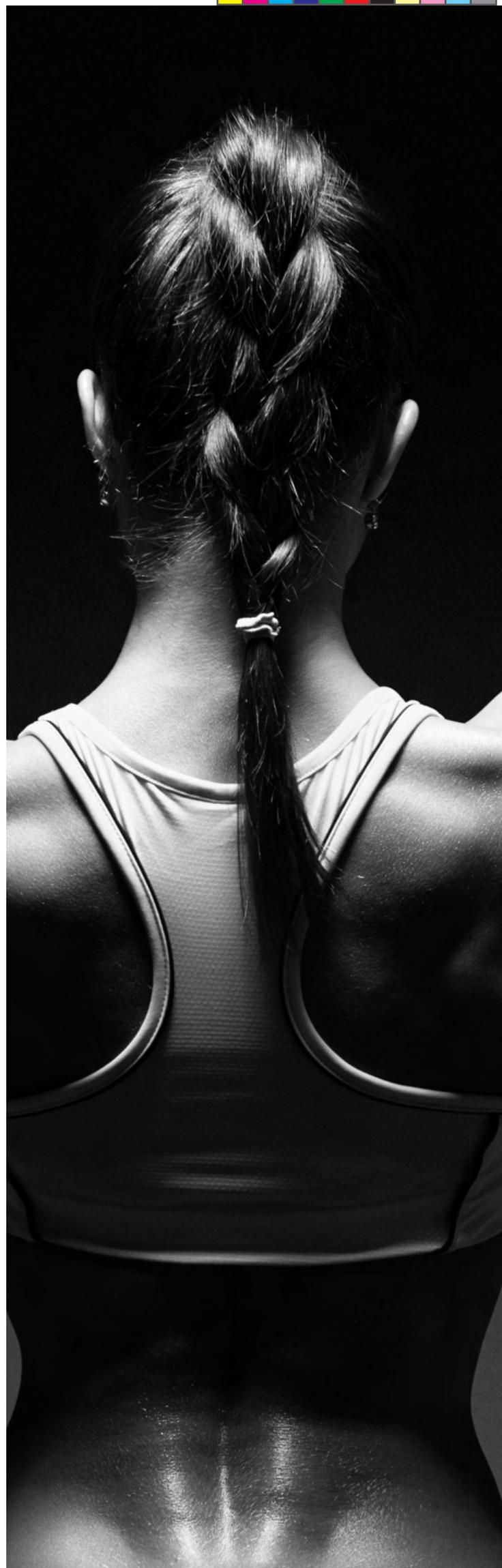
## What are the signs and symptoms?

**If a girl has risk factors for female athlete triad, she may already be experiencing some symptoms and signs of the disorder, such as:**

- Weight loss
- No periods or irregular periods
- Fatigue and decreased ability to concentrate
- Stress fractures (fractures that occur even if a person hasn't had a significant injury)

**Other injuries girls with female athlete triad often have signs and symptoms of eating disorders, such as:**

- Continued dieting in spite of weight loss
- Preoccupation with food and weight
- Frequent trips to the bathroom during and after meals
- Using laxatives
- Brittle hair or nails
- Dental cavities because in girls with bulimia tooth enamel is worn away by frequent vomiting
- Sensitivity to cold
- Low heart rate and blood pressure
- Heart irregularities and chest pain



## ▼ PARTICULAR ISSUES FOR WOMEN IN SPORT

### Media coverage of female sport

Just 2% of articles and 1% of images in the sports pages of national newspapers are devoted to female athletes and women's sport

### Sexploitation

Sexploitation of women and girls in sport is commonplace as typified by the cheerleading culture and revealing clothing expectation

### Confidence

Self-confidence is also linked to competition. Although some women enjoy the competitive element of sport, many girls and women are turned off sport because it's competitive. This is one of the reasons why activities such as dance, aerobics, gymnastics and yoga, are increasingly popular amongst girls and young women, and why some traditional team sports are less popular

### Commitment

Women who had children or those who worked shifts found it difficult to commit to doing exercise regularly because of other obligations. Participants new to sport were also reluctant to invest money in a gym or club membership until they were sure they would play/take part regularly.

### Being part of a club or team

Clubs are often perceived negatively by participants, for example: commitment, achieving and maintaining a high standard of skill, training and fitness sessions and competition, as opposed to just taking part and playing games.

### Competing in organised competitions

Participants enjoy a level of competition within a session through playing, and trying to win games or beating their own personal best times or distances. However, formal or organised competition or tournaments may be unappealing.

### Poor facilities

Females tend to prefer premises that are clean, tidy and well decorated. Poor washing and toilet facilities are also likely to be frowned upon by female boxers.

### Women are more coachable than men

- More willing to try new things – especially if it makes them perform better
- Have greater respect for the coach – and are more appreciative of good coaching and more likely to work hard to please the coach
- However, if coaches adopt an 'in your face' style, women are more likely to shut down than to challenge this behaviour

### Tips for working with female athletes/boxers

- When talking to a female athlete the 'praise sandwich' should have very thick bread and very thin cheese!
- Tell a female athlete what she is doing right and what she is doing wrong
- Build in time for female athletes to chat (social time)
- Do not shout, scream and swear at female athletes. They will 'shut down'
- Video / DVD is best used to show when something is being done right (or wrong)
- Create a team ethos in the gym
- Pressurise the team not the individual
- Invite feedback
- Explain the reasoning behind all training activities
- Run female only session
- Keep the gym and the toilets clean and tidy
- Recruit female coaches
- Have images of female boxers on the gym walls



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# SECTION 15

## CIRCUIT TRAINING

An important way to develop fitness in the gym is through the use of the boxer's own bodyweight through 'ground work', which can be organised into circuit training, individualised programmes and group work. Both cardiovascular fitness and strength can be easily developed in this way.

### **Easy to organise, practical and inexpensive**

There is no need for extra, expensive, equipment and the space demands are low. It's an accessible form of training which can be carried out in even the most basic gym space.

It's also possible to have a number of trainees working together and is ideal for coaches working in small teams or even alone.

### **Vary the degree of difficulty to easily cope with individual differences**

The degree of difficulty is easily changed by the coach to account for individual differences and needs of the growing child, as well as to offer a progressive routine where the trainee is challenged to improve.

### **Familiar exercises – but beware poor execution!**

While the exercises are generally well known and have been in use in gyms and school physical education programmes for many years, the fact that they are familiar does not mean that a number of the bodyweight exercises are generally carried out in good style. Some are often done poorly and as a result give less benefit than they should. Some may even lead to injury and so the coach must be in control of the group or individual to ensure good form in carrying out the exercises.



## Group or individual work?

Group work with bodyweight exercises can be done in a variety of ways depending on numbers (coaches and trainees), space available and the range of abilities with which the coach is working. It can, for example, be interwoven into a skipping programme where the coach calls out the exercises and the number of repetitions, while skipping on a timed interval basis is the core of the programme.

This variation on group work can be an excellent mixture of cardiovascular, local muscular endurance and strength development, suitable for all ages and stages of physical development. The number of repetitions, choice of exercises and skipping time periods can easily be varied to account for stages of physical and fitness development. Other ways of working with groups of trainees are typically in circuit training style

## Individual work programmes

Individualised programmes of work using the boxers own bodyweight will be needed to supplement group work for the training of Elite (and potentially Elite) boxers. This will focus on the boxer's specific fitness needs and any remedial work which needs to be done. The coach will need to supervise this directly to monitor form and timing

## ▼ GROUP WORK – CIRCUIT TRAINING

### Colour circuits using different 'stations'

- Exercises are carried out in a prearranged sequence.
- The difficulty level is indicated by colours marked on exercise cards which are set out at a number of stations around which the boxers move.
- The various colours can represent the number of repetitions to be carried out at each station so the colour circuit can offer the chance for boxers of differing standards to work together, for example with Boxer A carrying out five repetitions of the exercise, Boxer B, 8 reps and Boxer C, 10 reps.

### Exercises in a logical and practical sequence

The coach will have to ensure that the movement from station to station is logical in training terms (follows a sound physiological sequence) and practical logistically (using the available space safely and effectively).

### Managing the training process

The mixing of standards needs to be handled with care since 'traffic jams' should not slow down the trainee in progressing from station to station more than absolutely necessary. Trainees will differ in terms of how quickly they can carry out the number of repetitions required but the coach needs to manage the performance of the individual exercises to ensure that style doesn't get sacrificed for speed

### 'Ton-up' circuits using the same space for all exercises

- Exercises are performed in 10 sets of 10 repetitions.
- There is no need to move from station to station as the boxers can occupy the same space throughout the circuit.
- The exercises and their sequence can either be written on a board or copies given to each boxer.
- To monitor progress, the circuit can be timed, with a fastest time being recorded and set as a target. (Timing performance needs to be managed to avoid sacrificing technique for speed.)
- A possible variation on the fixed load ton-up circuit is to vary the difficulty by setting a fixed time period within which the boxer works on each exercise (a target circuit).

The exercises and the sequence in which they should be performed can be written on a board which the trainees can see and refer to OR, each can have a card with the exercises and sequence written down. The first option is obviously preferable in logistical terms when dealing with groups.





### **Timing the performance to monitor progress**

In order to monitor the progress of the trainees the circuit can be timed with a fastest time being recorded and set as a target. This can be done on both a group and an individual basis but with more mature and advanced trainees it is recommended that individual times are recorded and monitored as a guide to developing fitness.

### **Varying the time rather than numbers of repetitions**

Another possible variation on the ton-up style (fixed station) circuit is to vary the degree of difficulty by setting a time period within which the trainee works on that particular exercise, before moving on to a fixed interval of time allocated for the next exercise in the chain.

### **Varying physical demands over time – exercise specific factors**

This variation needs to be carefully planned however, since the same time period will not be appropriate for all the exercises. The big exercises using the legs and trunk in a dynamic way are very demanding on the cardiovascular system, but can be carried on for longer than exercises which use the smaller muscles of the arms and shoulders where local muscular fatigue sets in more rapidly. It makes little sense to choose a time span for every exercise which stresses one muscle group too severely and fails to challenge another.



### **Tailoring the exercise selection – mixing static and dynamic exercises**

The exercises should obviously be combined in such a way that the trainee gets a chance to rest the small muscle groups such as arms and shoulders, by including a dynamic large muscle group exercise after one which fatigues the small muscles. In this way the heart rate can be kept high and the exercise programme progress to its conclusion without a weaker link in the 'muscular chain' causing the sequence to slow up or break down.

### **Bodyweight exercises for circuits (some examples)**

1. wide arm press-ups
2. narrow press-ups (hands turned in and fingers touching)
3. medium width press-ups
4. bent leg sit-ups (slide hands to ankles on floor)
5. bent leg sit-ups (crunches with hands to side of head)
6. bent leg sit-ups (alternate elbow to knee)
7. bent leg sit-ups (hands reach to knees)
8. 'V' sit-ups
9. trunk raise lying (face down and hands on head)
10. tuck jumps
11. burpees
12. squat thrusts
13. alternate squat thrusts
14. split squats
15. lunges (alternate legs)
16. half squats
17. jump squats

This is just a selection of the many exercises which use the bodyweight of the trainee and the force of gravity to provide resistance. Some are very dynamic, some quite static and they can be combined in ways which are appropriate to the age, training history and fitness level of the trainees.

**IT IS CRITICAL THAT EXERCISE STYLE ISN'T SACRIFICED FOR SPEED. GOOD FORM AND FULL RANGE OF MOVEMENT ARE CRITICAL**

### **▼ SAFETY**

Exercises where there is a potential for injury to the individual trainee (or another trainee) need to be managed carefully by the coach. The training space and floor needs to be managed to ensure safety and avoid loss of balance and collision. The risk factors need to be assessed. Exercises which allow the trainee to stop short of full range need to be carefully monitored, since both experienced and inexperienced trainees will inevitably cut corners to make for faster times - and to make the exercise easier.







## ▼ COMMON FAULTS

### Sit-ups

Which are targeted at the abdominals are often performed poorly with too large a range of motion which involves the hip flexors more than the abdominals. The abdominal muscles do not cross the hip joint and so 'full range' sit-ups are of limited use for this purpose. Sit-ups with straight legs (as often taught in bygone days) pose an unacceptable risk of lower back strain and should be avoided. In any event they are an almost exclusively hip flexor exercise.

### Press-ups

Which stop short of full arm extension at the top of the exercise pathway are very common. This often comes from attempting too great a speed of execution and sacrificing quality for quantity. With less fit trainees and younger boxers there is often a tendency to lose the flat back position in the press-up by letting the hips sag or easing the strain on the arms, which stop short of full arm extension at the top of the exercise pathway are very common. This often comes from attempting too great a speed of execution and sacrificing quality for quantity.

### Lunges

Where the base of support is too narrow and where the front knee extends far in front of the foot are to be avoided. It's also helpful to make sure the trainees start the movement from a position where the feet are not too close together but rather a little wider than shoulder width to avoid the trainee 'walking the tightrope' in the lunge position. Letting the torso lean forward is also a common problem which needs to be addressed through making the hips and lower back more flexible. This can take time and needs specific remedial work through developmental stretching.

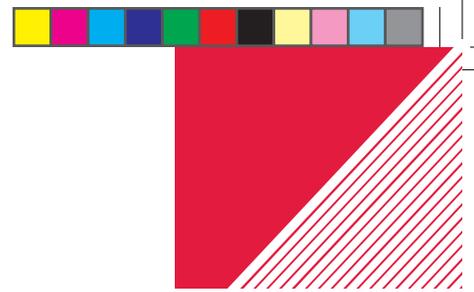
### Squats

Where the heels come off the floor because of inadequate flexibility in the ankle joints and Achilles tendons are frequently a problem – as is a forward torso lean. An upright body and flat back (see Resistance Training – weights) should be encouraged to mimic the flexing of the knees in the defensive 'ducking' manoeuvre. No coach would encourage a boxer to change their 'level' by ducking into the opponent's punch. Why then allow the trainee to change the 'level' in squatting by leaning forward?

### Squat thrusts

In exercises such as the squat thrust there is a common tendency to shorten the extension of the legs in order to get more 'reps' in a faster time. This defeats one of the objects of the exercise. Better slightly fewer squat thrusts in better form with full extension. In the Burpee or Jump Squat there is often a tendency to cut down the height reached. Instead of reaching up to 'head the football' the trainee will hunch the shoulders, barely leave the ground and typically have a rounded back. All technique faults to be avoided.





## ▼ DEVELOPING CIRCUITS

- Coach sets the load
- No equipment needed
- General fitness – cardiovascular and muscular strength and endurance
- Building a platform to build in the closed season and early season
- Load can be easily increased in terms of reps and 'angle of exercise'
- Exercises become more boxing specific
- Timed (often to mimic duration of rounds)
- Introduce simple apparatus such as medicine balls, kettlebells or dumbbells can be set at particular stations (and should be appropriate to the age, experience and level of the boxers)
- Managing the range of resistance: in a mixed group with differing ages and stages of development, the same resistance will not be suitable for all. Resistance in the form of medicine balls and weights needs planning and management
- A set time period will not be appropriate for all exercises. The massive exercises using the legs and trunk can generally be carried on for longer than those using the smaller muscles of the arms and shoulders, where tiredness sets in more quickly
- Mixing static and dynamic exercises: exercises should be sequenced so boxers get a chance to rest the small muscle groups, such as arms and shoulders, by including a dynamic large muscle group exercise after one which tires the small muscles

## ▼ CONCLUSIONS

While there are a number of issues of body and space management, which must be closely monitored by the coach, the bodyweight exercises which are generally used in circuit training are easily learned, effective in developing cardiovascular fitness, strength and local muscular endurance, not demanding of space or equipment and are able to be adapted to cope with individual differences. In short they are ideal for all gyms and all standards of boxer when managed creatively and well.

**REMEMBER - GOOD FORM AND FULL EXTENSION AT ALL TIMES!  
BE SAFE AND BE EFFECTIVE.**







# SECTION 16

## RUNNING FOR CONDITIONING

Amateur boxing is an essentially explosive, 'power based' sport but boxers nevertheless need good aerobic fitness and there is no substitute for running as a method of conditioning. Boxers need to run!

Other aerobic activities like rowing, swimming, cycling and use of cross training machines (if your boxers have access to them) also have their place in a well rounded conditioning programme. This is especially true for heavyweight athletes whose joints may react badly to running (or for boxers with an injury to knee or ankle where impact work is impossible), but aerobic and anaerobic running are fundamental to conditioning for boxing.

### The Aerobic Base – developing VO2Max

VO2Max, in general terms, is the 'gold standard' measurement of aerobic fitness.

It is the maximal rate at which an athlete's body can extract and use oxygen from the atmosphere, in order for the blood to transport it to the muscles to be used in fuelling performance. It's only one measure among many however, which exercise physiologists and coaches use to develop training programmes for specific sports and to measure the effects of training.

### Heart Rate Training Zones

Coaches and boxers need to know and understand the idea of 'heart rate training zones'. Heart rate training zones are an important component of both aerobic and anaerobic conditioning for boxing and this means the coach and the boxer MUST have a record of RHR (resting heart rate) and MHR (maximum heart rate).

RHR in beats per minute is best measured first thing in the morning on waking. A good rule of thumb is that the MHR is 220 minus the boxer's age. This will mean that a 20 yr old will have a maximum of 200bpm and a 30 yr old, 190bpm.



## ▼ WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE USE THE TERM 'LEVELS'?

### LEVEL 1

#### The Energy Efficient or Recovery Zone (60%-70% MHR)

Training in this zone develops basic endurance and aerobic capacity. It's at a slow jog and easy 'recovery' running and should be completed at a maximum of 70% of MHR. An advantage of running in this zone is that the main fuel for your muscles is fat and it can be useful for weight loss. It allows your working muscles to re-fuel with glycogen. This is low stress work and should be enjoyed! Try doing it with a friend and if you can carry on an easy conversation it is at the right pace.

### LEVEL 2

#### The Aerobic Zone (70%-80% MHR)

Training in this zone will start to develop the cardiovascular system and aerobic capacity. The body's ability to transport oxygen to, and carbon dioxide away from the working muscles can be developed in this zone. This is more stressful than Level 1 but only moderately so and you can still carry on a conversation – but not so easily - as you run at a 'steady state' for between 20 and 60 mins.

### LEVEL 3

#### The Anaerobic Zone (80%-90% MHR)

Training in this zone will put you under significant pressure and one result is to develop your lactic acid system. The primary fuel for the working muscles becomes glycogen (which is stored in the muscles) rather than fat, and one of the by-products of burning glycogen is lactic acid. There is a point where the body can no longer remove the lactic acid fast enough and performance starts to break down with pain in the muscles. It is possible through training at Level 3 to delay this point of breakdown by becoming more able to deal with the lactic acid build up. This is sustained running for moderate distances at high intensity and conversation while you work at this level is **NOT** possible.

### LEVEL 4

#### The Red Line Zone (90%-100% MHR)

Training in this zone will include explosive sprinting to develop limb speed as well as 'speed endurance' running. Actual sprinting will only be possible for short periods. The fuel for sprinting (anaerobic work) is glycogen. It effectively trains your 'fast-twitch' muscle fibres and helps to develop limb speed. This zone is typical of interval training (see below) when a good aerobic base has been built up. A 'speed endurance' run will stress the boxer to Level 4.

From a mechanical point of view there is research to show that the 'trained' heart is most efficient when working between 170 and 185 bpm. The Performance Coach should therefore aim to have the Elite boxer working in the 180bpm range. It will need considerable 'lead in' time to get the boxers who aspire to be Elite to this level of fitness.

Level 1 and 2 coaches will deal, for the most part, with non-Elite boxers who will box for the club and possibly in divisional and regional championships but these club boxers can approach Elite levels of fitness with high motivation and good guidance from the coach.





## ▼ RECOVERY

### Heart rate recovery

After a burst of activity taking the boxer up into the 'training zone' there will need to be a recovery time and distance, which for the Elite boxer working in the 180bpm zone will be to get the heart rate down to 120 - 140 bpm, before starting on another set. (For boxers who are younger and/or less fit the upper training range will be lower and the target recovery heart rate correspondingly lower – and they will take longer to get to the 'recovered' phase.)

### Distance recovery

A set of 200m interval runs might include a 400m jog recovery between runs, a set of 80m interval runs include a 160m jog recovery and a set of 40m interval runs an 80m jog recovery.

### Recovery time

A guide to recovery time should be based on approximately 3 x the run time, so a 30sec 200m would allow an 90sec recovery time, and a 11sec 100m would allow a 33sec recovery time. As the run time gets faster the recovery time also decreases but there is a clear limit to how low a non-specialist runner can get his/her running times.

## ▼ HOW OFTEN SHOULD BOXERS RUN?

- Two or three times per week for a novice
- Three or four times per week for an intermediate or open class
- Perhaps as often as six times per week for an international
- Occasionally for a schoolboy



## ▼ TYPES OF RUN

### Steady State Runs

- For boxing: three to five miles
- From, easy jog – able to converse, to pushed run – unable to talk, up to three quarters of maximum speed
- Vary course and terrain for interest and to avoid tedium
- Aerobic training zone

### 'Fartlek' Runs

- Swedish for 'speed play'
- Variable speed: walk, jog, run, sprint
- Variable distance: two to four miles
- Variable terrain: grass, woodland, roads, sand, ploughed fields
- Dips in and out of the anaerobic training zone

### Sustained Distance Runs

- As fast as the athlete is able
- One to three miles
- Smooth underfoot conditions to avoid injury
- Time or distance may be set
- Results often recorded

### Interval Run

- A sustained run at near maximum speed for the distance (7/8ths speed typically). Repeated several times, after a period of recovery.

#### Examples:

- 3 x 400M with 800M jog recovery
- 6 x 200M with 400M jog recovery
- 4 x 100M with 2000M jog recovery
- Recovery time should be approximately 3 x run time
- To increase intensity, reduce the recovery (heart rate is actually the better measure of recovery)

### Speed Endurance Run

- A run at close to maximum speed
- Recovery time less than the run time

#### Examples:

- Two minutes run x 4, one minute recovery
- Three minutes run x 3, one minute recovery
- 15 second sprint, 15 second jog x 15
- 4 x 150M, 15 seconds recovery, two sets
- 4 x 100M, 10 seconds recovery, three sets
- 4 x 50M, 5 seconds recovery, four sets

### Speed Run

- 20M to 80M runs at full speed
- Adequate recovery between runs
- Full recovery between sets

#### Examples:

- 3 x 80M, 3 sets
- 4 x 60M, 3 sets
- 4 x 40M, 4 sets





## ▼ A POWER SPORT NEEDS LIMB SPEED

Just as in gym training, realism is important in selecting the sort of running which you need to do and since amateur boxing is all about rapid movement, it makes sense to include running where the boxer is moving (sprinting), as rapidly as possible in order to train for increased limb speed and recruit fast-twitch muscle fibres.

### **Realistic distances**

Since very few boxers are trained runners, this means that the distances must be such that sprinting (as opposed to fast running) is actually possible. This means that the sprint distances are likely to be 100m (or less) and for junior boxers less than 50m. It's important in sprint training (which is designed to train fast-twitch muscle fibres and encourage limb speed) that the sprint distance is not too long, otherwise the boxer will run as fast as they can to cover the distance, **NOT** run as fast as they can.

### **Traditional roadwork is not enough**

While steady state running or traditional roadwork has an important place in conditioning for amateur boxing, it is **NOT** enough on its own since it doesn't relate at all to the competitive demands of amateur boxing, where bursts of extreme activity are followed by less intense movement patterns, before another high energy burst takes place. At Elite level the periods between bursts of extreme Level 4 type activity in contests are very short.

### **Realistic schedules to achieve objectives**

The coach will have to make out running schedules which fit the age, fitness level, available training time and 'quality' of the boxer. These schedules must be realistic.

We can expect (and demand) a level of running performance from Elite boxers which is far in advance of what a club boxer, especially a junior, might be called upon (or be able) to do.

### **Building and maintaining the aerobic base**

Building the necessary aerobic base at Level 2 is a task mainly for the off-season, where the boxer builds up the capacity to keep going over a period of time far in excess of the actual duration of a bout. We can see this as building up 'capital' to underpin the investment of energy in training and competition.

Even in the competitive season there will be a need to keep the aerobic base intact by regular 'steady state' runs of in excess of 30 mins. and a mixture of 'speed play' (Fartlek) where the steady state run is broken up by bursts of faster paced running on a variety of terrain. There will also be a place for Level 1 running in the competitive season where the objective is recovery and relaxation through 'active rest'.





## ▼ SAFETY FACTORS AND LONG-TERM CONSIDERATIONS

- All athletes should wear good quality, well- fitting running shoes in good condition
- All running training sessions should begin with a warm-up
- All running training sessions should end with a cool-down/flexibility session
- Be aware of the dangers of too much running on hard ground
- Be aware of the dangers of young athletes running too far and too often
- Be aware of the risks associated with athletes running in the dark
- Flat out sprinting can result in injury

### Surfaces for running

The sort of surface the boxer has to run on will also affect the amount and type of running if injury is to be avoided. Pavements are not 'leg friendly'! Access to a track is unlikely for most clubs but if there is a possibility to access to one it should be taken advantage of.

### Proper footwear

Good footwear is essential and at the Elite level, specialist advice needs to be taken on gait analysis since the running style needs to be accommodated by a shoe which fits 'neutral' runners or 'pronators' who need extra support.

### Warm-up and cool-down

Getting ready for work is important. For intense training, especially at Heart Rate Levels 3 and 4, warming up and mobilizing is absolutely essential. Getting the heart rate and body temperature up and doing some dynamic stretching before intense work is a must, but don't forget to cool-down as well. Dynamic stretching does **NOT** mean bouncing into and out of stretched positions. Cooling-down is the start of the recovery phase, it's important to start this phase properly to minimize stiffness and get maximum benefit from the overload involved in intense training.

### Varying the venue and type of run

The stage of the season and when the contest is to take place will influence how, how much, how far and how fast the boxers run. Building, maintaining and tapering off are all important phases which mean different sorts of running and intensities of work. Putting some variety into the places where you run and the sort of running which you do is important to avoid staleness and boredom.







**130.**





# SECTION 17

## WEIGHT TRAINING

Boxers need power, fast hands, feet and body movements but, above all, they need to be able to react fast, make decisions and act in an instant with skills which don't break down under the pressure of competition and/or lack of conditioning!

These notes are **NOT** about bodybuilding, nor are they about weightlifting for its own sake, they are about using resistance, including through weights, to improve performance in the sport of boxing. The weights and routines are a tool to allow you and the boxer to work to develop to the fullest potential.

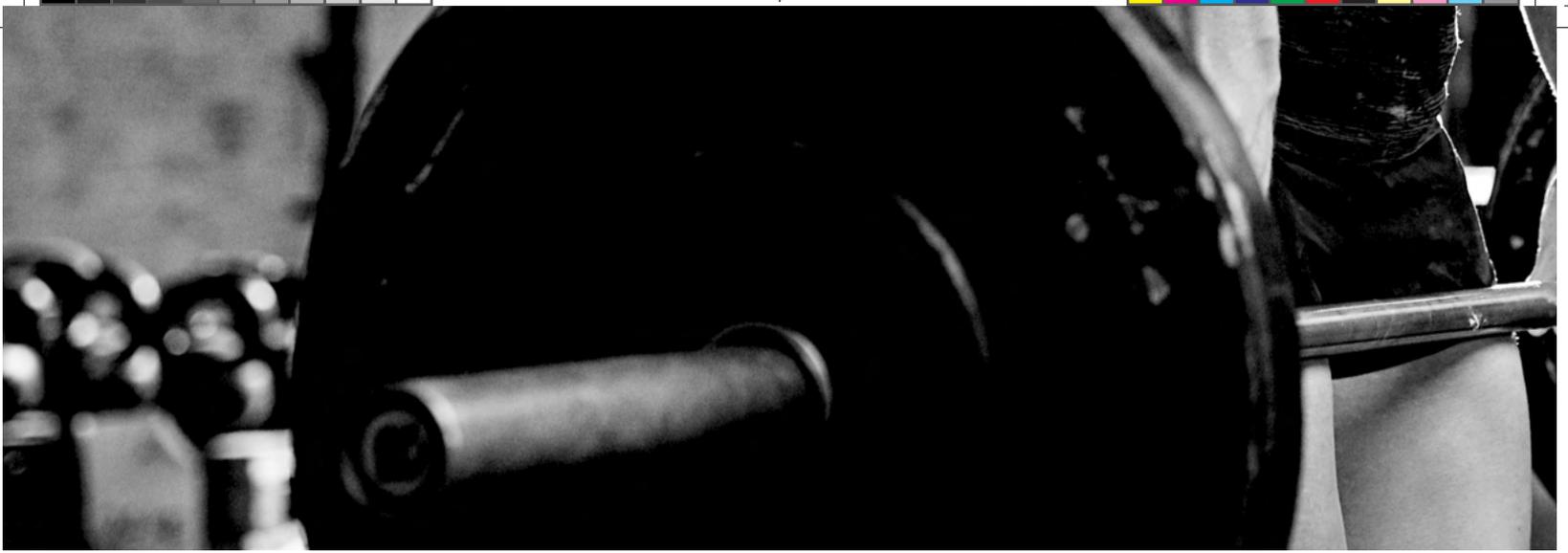
The exercises to develop strength and power need to be in balance with those to develop muscular endurance and exercises performed in a particular way will determine the outcome – although some movements are more appropriate for one or other purpose.

This chapter is just an introduction to a complex area of coaching and research based evidence on the development of strength and speed. The ABAE will offer specialist workshops to allow the coach to develop expertise in this area of conditioning.

**With proper resistance training it's possible to develop all these qualities:**

- Strength
- Speed
- Power (mixture of strength and speed)
- Faster reactions,
- Muscular endurance
- Flexibility
- Mobility
- Balance

Deciding on how to develop the qualities which the boxer needs by organizing a resistance training programme needs good planning and preparation, but it's important not just to plan and prepare effectively but also to review progress and evaluate where you started from, where you needed to get to, how you set about getting there and whether you have succeeded or not.



## ▼ PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Working out a resistance training schedule for a boxer will depend on a number of very important factors – here are some examples:

1. Age in terms of years and physiological development
2. Training history – what are they doing at school in PE and what have they been doing in training at your club? For adults, what is the nature of their job?
3. Gender – boys and girls mature at different ages. Girls mature earlier
4. Physical type – you will deal with a thin, tall boxer with long levers differently from a short stocky one
5. Natural talent and potential to be a good (possibly Elite) performer
6. Learning style – can the boxer concentrate well and does he/she learn skills quickly
7. Relative importance of resistance training and cardio training in the available time
8. Stage of the competitive season – off-season work will differ from competitive season work
9. Equipment available - including the space and flooring where the workout will take place
10. Expert advice and support in teaching the 'fast' lifts
11. Your own level of competence in teaching **safe** and **effective** resistance training for the sport of boxing.
12. Are you working with an individual boxer, a small group (3 or 4) or a larger number of trainees? This will have a big influence on what you do in both practical and technical terms.
13. Place in the workout regime – 'fast' lifts to develop power and 'heavy' work to develop strength need a well prepared body and alert mind so need to be in a separate workout, 'fitness' weight routines can follow boxing skill learning and practice in the same workout

## ▼ BASIC PRINCIPLES OF RESISTANCE TRAINING WITH WEIGHTS

- Power** - low reps (3-5), moderately high to high weight loading  
**Strength** - medium to low reps (3-8), high weight loading  
**Endurance** - high reps (12-20), low weight loading

The foundation of power is strength. There is no way you can develop maximum power without being strong first. The largest muscles of the body in the legs, back and trunk are crucial for the development of strength and power. Biomechanical analyses of movement and punching in boxing show what muscle groups should be prioritized. These **core** muscles of the trunk, the legs and hips are a priority since the rotation which generates the speed and power of the punch is generated there from a good base of support from the legs and correct foot placement.

The muscular endurance needed to underpin movement in the ring will demand well trained calf muscles and repeated punching and maintaining a proper guard position will demand well trained shoulder muscles so resistance training for boxing will need to cover both massive muscle groups for generating power and smaller muscles which need to display endurance.

The main objective of Resistance Training programme for boxing should be to develop the 'prime movers', which are going to increase the boxer's effectiveness and also to keep the physical development in balance to make injury from physical imbalance less likely.

Muscle action consists of two phases as a lift is performed, the concentric contraction as the muscle shortens and the eccentric contraction as the muscle lengthens. There is evidence that in training for strength it is important to emphasise the eccentric phase of the movement by lowering the weight or returning to the start position more slowly than it was lifted.



## ▼ PROGRESSIVE OVERLOAD AND ADAPTION

In resistance training the principle of 'overload' and adaptation is crucially important. No overload - no progress. Too much overload and not enough recovery - no progress!

The systems of the body (in this case the major muscles of the body, heart and lungs, the oxygen transport system and waste product removal system) need to be stressed (overloaded) in order to become more efficient and capable of dealing with gradually increasing training poundage, more intense work in training and the very high work rate of competition. Continued stress (with appropriate recovery) will lead to adaptation and 'super-compensation' Too little recovery and too much work will lead to overtraining rather than super-compensation.

## ▼ PERIODISATION

Resistance training – like all forms of conditioning for sport – can be organised in periods of differing intensity and this is what is often called 'periodisation'. At Elite level this is certainly necessary but even with boxers who just train to compete for the club it's important to remember that progress isn't continual over time and cycles of training may fall into different phases of the year.

Not all sessions can, or should, be pitched at the same intensity and variety is essential to keep up interest and motivation as well as to allow recovery from intense work.

Boxers will reach plateaus in their resistance training where, after an initial burst of rapid progress, improvement in poundage used and number of sets and reps performed will slow down or even stop. This is where the skill of the coach comes in and varying the workload and exercises used will get the process moving forward again.

Traditional thinking has suggested that sessions in the off season will differ from the competitive season and that it may be appropriate to lay down a 'strength base' in the off season before turning to a more power-based routine in the pre season and a maintenance routine in the competitive season.

There is now evidence from sports, however, that athletes don't truly periodise in the traditional on/off season split. Some elite athletes don't really periodise their resistance training at all. They just use squats, jumps squats, cleans and plyometrics all year round. The loading patterns shift a little but not excessively.

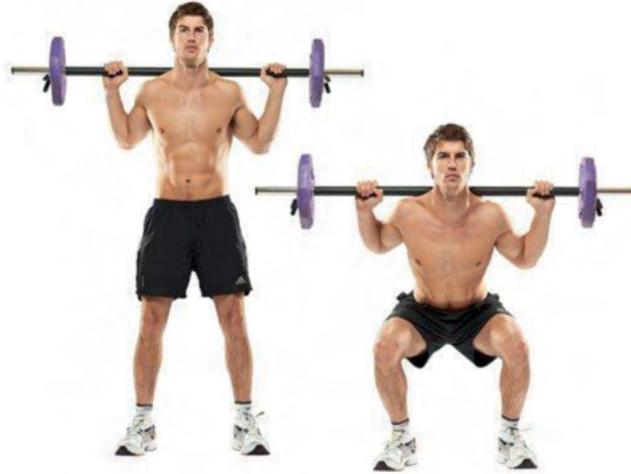
Current thinking in sports science suggests that when we talk about a strength block or a power block in terms of periodisation, it's not that we move completely one way or the other but emphasise one or the other type of training. Athletes may simply shift them into a maintenance level of training while still making sure that the volume and intensity of the weight training complements and doesn't supercede training and preparation for the sport.

Elite performers in boxing will operate in micro (short) meso (medium) and macro (long-term) cycles of training, which will be governed by the timing of events and the stages of physical preparation **BUT** the periodisation of resistance training for Elite boxers is a complex matter and needs to be under the supervision of an EIS Strength and Conditioning specialist in co-ordination with the Head Performance Coach and the Sport Science Team.



## ▼ TYPES OF TRAINING WITH WEIGHTS – SOME KEY EXERCISES

### SQUATS



### SPLIT SQUATS



### BENCH PRESS





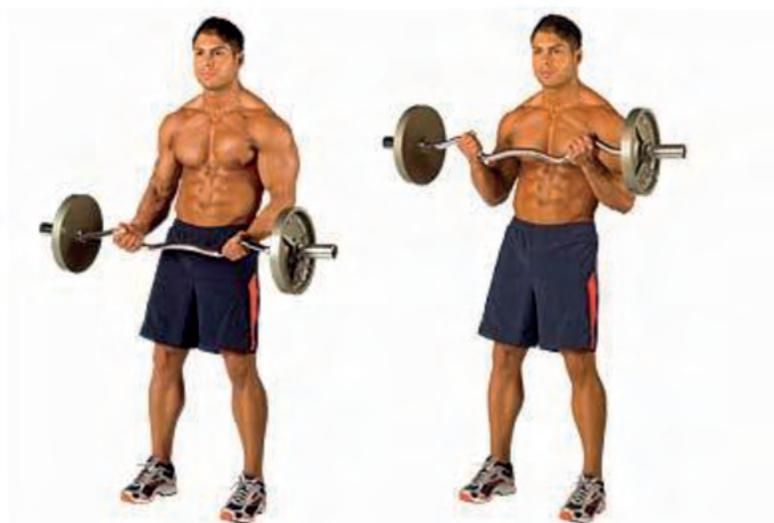
## BARBELL PRESS BEHIND NECK



## UPRIGHT ROW



## BICEP CURLS





## SINGLE ARM ROW



## TRICEPS CURL



## DEADLIFTS

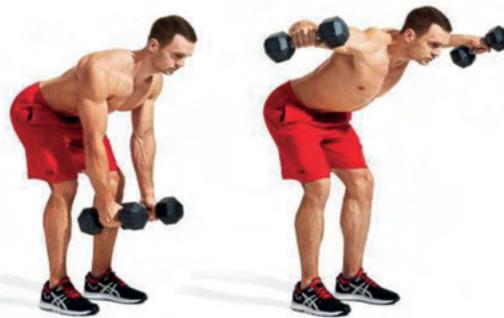




## POWER CLEANS



## LATERAL RAISE



## HIGH PULLS





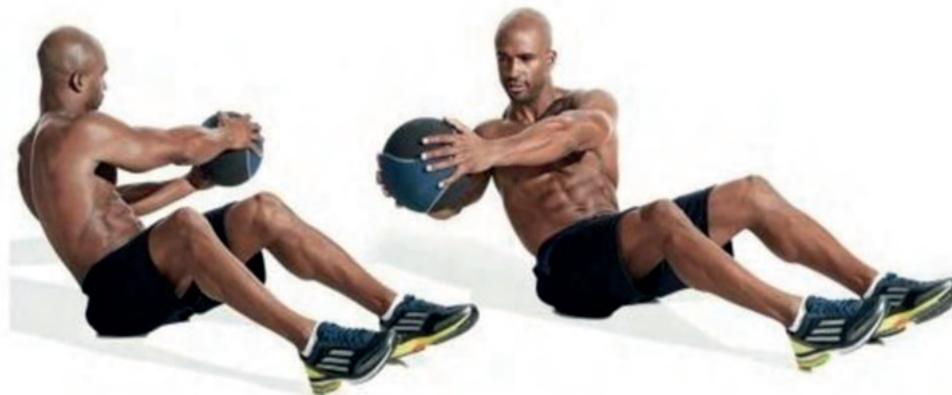
## DYNAMIC LUNGES



## CHEST FLIES



## RUSSIAN TWISTS



## ▼ PLANNING AND ORGANISING THE WEIGHT SESSION

All exercises are performed in **sets** composed of a number of **reps** in each of a series of exercises. The way this is put together in a schedule will determine what results you will get.

It's important to define what we mean by 'heavy' and 'light' in planning the lifts in any session or series of sessions. They will be organized according to what the objective is, whether strength, power or muscular endurance but in order to determine what the weight load should be it's necessary to understand the ideas of one rep maximum (1RM) and repetition maximum (RM)

1RM is the maximum weight which can be lifted one time. RM is the maximum number of repetitions which can be completed before fatigue prevents another rep. A weight load which causes momentary muscular failure after three reps is termed a 3 rep max (3RM) and typically corresponds to 95% of the 1RM.

The strength training zone calls for the use of loads (after full warm ups) in the range 75% - 95% of 1RM. The power training zone utilizes weights which are typically in the range 70% - 90% of 1RM. Proper warm ups and mobilization are essential when we are dealing with such high weight loading.

The setting of specialist strength and power schedules for boxers at various ages and stages in their training and competitive careers is a complex matter where the boxing coach is well advised to contact a specialist strength and conditioning coach from BWLA or EIS

If the trainee is a beginner the number of sets and reps will be adjusted accordingly to produce a small workload with the emphasis on learning good technique and body position. More advanced trainees can vary the workload and exercise selection depending on their objectives.

The time of that year relative to the competitive season is also important. Off-season training (for strength), pre-season training (for power) and competition season (for maintaining power) will all demand differing schedules and exercise selection.

For Elite boxers their position in a 'periodised' schedule to be completed over a cycle of several months leading up to a competition will determine the exercise selection and the choice of sets and reps.

You may be lucky enough to have sufficient space and equipment to set up a weight circuit and this can be a very good way of working on muscular endurance but if you lack the equipment and/or space don't even try!

Most coaches don't have access to the sort of gym where performance squads can utilize this type of training and even if they do they are likely to lack the quantity and quality (especially collars for the various bars) which make a weight circuit a viable, safe and useful training method.



## ▼ SAFETY FACTORS FOR WEIGHT TRAINING – RISK ASSESSMENT IS VITAL!

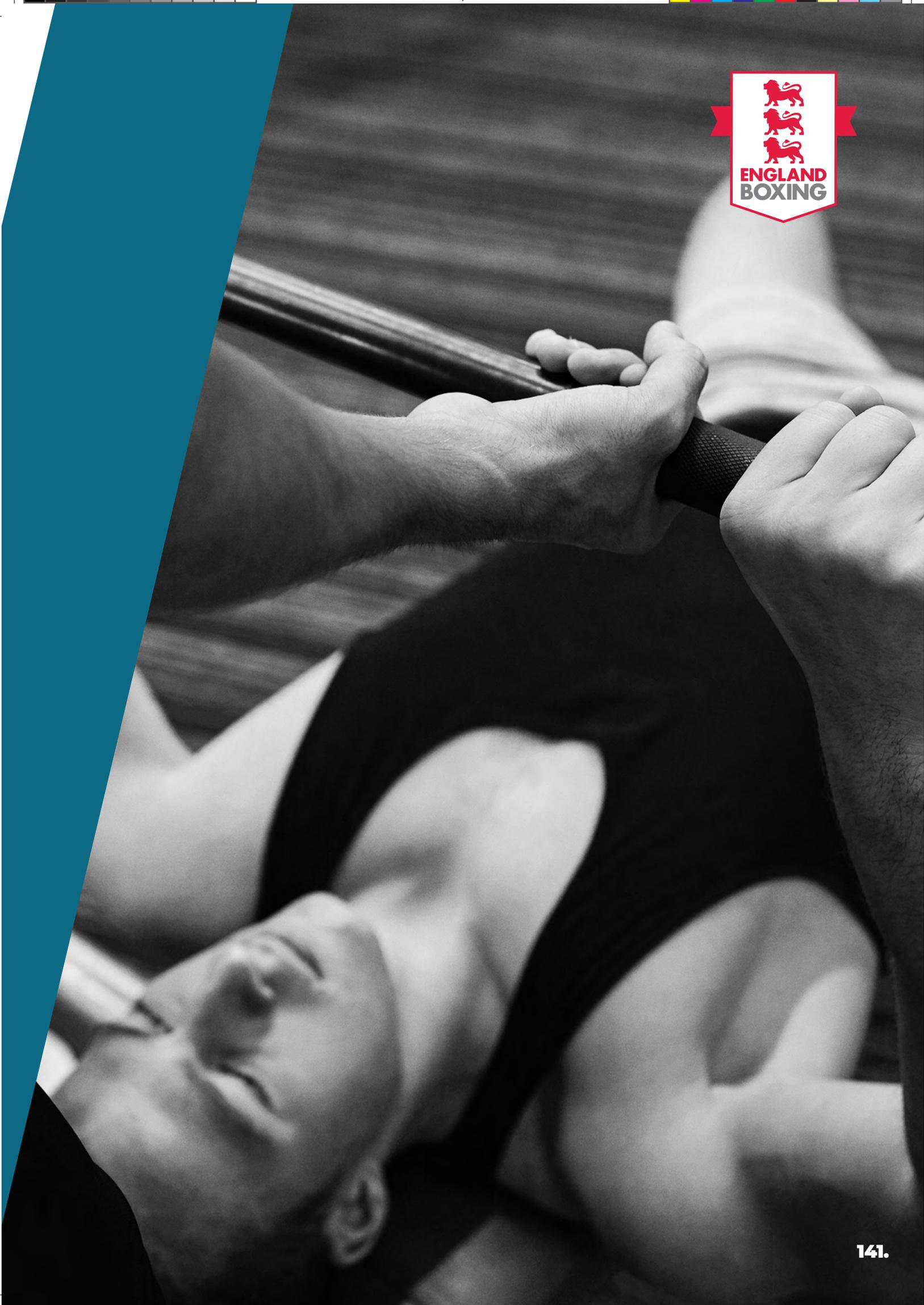
Safety comes down to both personal and equipment factors, both what is worn, especially strong and supportive footwear and the actual equipment and training space itself – especially the floor!.

As a coach it's your responsibility to ensure that no boxer works with weights alone and/or unsupervised and that those working together understand their responsibility as 'spotters' and training partners and are trained to do it!

Body management, including warm-ups and cool-downs, body position, exercise style and **CONCENTRATION** (including the training partners) are all vital for safe and effective training!

### Some key safety factors:

- Body positions – flat back while lifting and flexible ankles and Achilles to keep heels on floor and keep proper alignment relative to centre of gravity when lifting weights off the floor.
- Warm-up and cool-down routines are essential. You must get the body ready for work and allow it to recover after the session by mobilization before and stretching after the workout. Full range of motion dynamic warm-up drills are vital.
- No 'Limit poundage' for inexperienced trainees and only under close supervision for those who are experienced. – The coach needs to work out what is heavy, moderate and light for the trainee as he/she progresses.
- Spotters are necessary for some movements and the coach must know how to train them to 'spot' – e.g. concentration at all times on the moving bar and the lifter and locked hands under it.
- Learning the correct style and body position for the movements is essential and the coach must set the correct number of reps to 'groove' a movement while it is being learned with a light weight. Good body positions at all times!
- Fatigue is a potential danger in performing skilled movements so the power exercises need to be handled with care so that fatigue doesn't lead to bad body positions. This is also true of the strength builders where training with inappropriately heavy weights can lead to bad body position and restricted range of movement.
- Proper record keeping is necessary to measure progress and account for health, injury and time constraints
- Proper use of secure collars is absolutely essential. Weights must be secured on the bar. Squat stands and benches must be checked before every session and pins to allow varying height adjustments must be well fitted and strong
- The training space needs to be clear and uncluttered and where power movements are being performed there must be safe space round the lifter
- The floor needs to be solid and non-slip and where the strength and power builders are being performed a heavy duty matted surface is advisable
- The trainee must wear solid and secure shoes/trainers when doing the strength and power builders
- Good coach feedback is essential – spotting and dealing with the crucial safety issues (especially in body management) before correcting the technical ones. The 'Coaching Eye' needs to be developed through training and experience.
- Good gym discipline is essential with concentration from lifters, spotters and coaches alike – especially with the strength and power builders
- Weights are best not used at all if they are going to be used badly, with poor preparation, an inadequate facility or equipment, inappropriate exercise selection and poor supervision.
- There is the potential for injury at worst and for inappropriate physical development at best. If in doubt seek advice!







# SECTION 18

## SPARRING

Sparring should only be supervised by Level II, III or IV coaches. However, England Boxing encourages Level I Coaches to observe sparring sessions carried out by coaches who are Level II qualified or above. This will help to prepare them to coach sparring should they decide to progress to a higher coaching qualification.

- Sparring should only occur in a boxing ring with a cushioned floor and canvas, secure ropes and pad protected corner posts.
- Boxers must wear gum shields, headguards and groin guards. Gloves must be a minimum of 10oz and in good condition.
- Boxers should only participate in open sparring with an appropriate BCR1 card which confirms that a boxing medical has been completed within the previous 12 months.
- Boxers should only spar if they are registered with EB via [www.EnglandBoxingInsight.com](http://www.EnglandBoxingInsight.com)
- Boxers must not spar during a medical suspension

Sparring is a vital part of any boxers training programme. Indeed it is arguably the most important part. However, it must be borne in mind that sparring is a relatively high risk activity.

### Safety Considerations

- Open sparring should only be allowed to take place when the boxers are of similar age, weight and experience.
- Sparring should usually take place near the start of a training session and should stop when fatigue sets in. It is extremely unlikely that sparring would be used as part of a conditioning programme. Sparring is about skill development and contest preparation.

## ▼ TYPES OF SPARRING

### Technique Sparring

In technique sparring, a specific skill is developed. The speed is usually controlled and the sparring partner usually acts in a semi-passive role. e.g. lead hand to the head with a block as a defence. Technique sparring is vital for the beginner.

### Conditioned Sparring

In conditioned sparring the coach sets a condition (or several conditions) that each boxer must adhere to. The speed is more realistic than a technique spar but the power is usually kept quite low. (See attached sheet for full details.) The sparring is generally geared to skill development in an individual. Typically, 75% of sparring is conditioned (see attached sheet for ideas that can be used in conditioned sparring.)

### Open Sparring

In open sparring the range of punches and defences are unlimited. Punches and footwork are full speed. Even in open sparring the power is often reduced. Coach feedback and correction is given on-the-move, such that the flow is uninterrupted.





# SECTION 19

## THE USE OF COACHING PADS

Coaching pads are a vital tool for the boxing coach. Pads are usually enjoyed by the boxer and on the hands of a quality practitioner they can be used to help a boxer make rapid progress.

Poor quality padwork can ingrain serious faults into a boxer and the lone coach will find it difficult to coordinate a complete coaching session if he or she is involved in one-to-one pads with a handful of boxers.

### **Pads can be used for:**

- Teaching basic punches
- Teaching defences
- Teaching combination punching
- Teaching multiple attacks
- Teaching phasing of attacks
- Developing counterpunching
- Fault correction
- Conditioning (interval training)
- Speed development
- Warming up prior to a contest



## ▼ BASIC PAD POSITIONS

When 'taking pads' the coach should on most occasions take a boxing stance and guard as a starting position.

### **Straight shots from the orthodox boxer**

Should be taken on the right pad. The pad centre should be held at the level of the boxer's nose. The palm should face the boxer.

### **Straight shots from the southpaw boxer**

Should be taken on the left pad. The pad centre should be held at the level of the boxer's nose. The palm should face the boxer.

### **Left hook to the head**

Should be taken on the left pad. The pad centre should be held level with the boxer's nose. The pad palm should face towards the coach's right.

### **Right hook to the head**

Should be taken on the right pad. The pad centre should be held level with the boxer's nose. The pad palm should face toward the coach's left.

### **Left hook to the body**

Should normally be taken on the left pad held at rib height with the palm facing the coach's right, at an angle of 45 degrees.

### **Right hook to the body**

Should normally be taken on the right pad held at rib height with the palm facing the coach's left, at an angle of 45 degrees.

### **Left uppercut**

Should normally be taken on the right pad with the palm facing towards the boxer, at an angle of 45 degrees. For short range uppercuts the palm should face the floor.

### **Right uppercut**

Should normally be taken on the left pad with the palm facing towards the boxer, at an angle of 45 degrees. For short range uppercuts the palm should face the floor.

These are the principal positions but there are many situations where these guidelines will not be appropriate. The coach must select the best pad positions to provide a realistic target to address the coaching issue to be addressed at any given time.

These are the principal positions but there are many situations where these guidelines will not be appropriate. The coach must select the best pad positions to provide a realistic target to address the coaching issue at any given time.





## ▼ KEEPING IT REAL

- The coach should take an 'on guard' position
- The target must be realistic
- The coach controls the boxer
- The target should not be moved towards the punch
- The coach usually needs to move like a boxer
- The punch cue may be physical or verbal

## ▼ TYPES OF PADWORK POTENTIAL PITFALLS (PADWORK CRIMES)

**The effective coach needs to beware the potential pitfalls when using padwork:**

- Presenting an unrealistic target
- Lack of variety in combinations
- Letting faults go uncorrected
- Not moving feet
- Being static
- 'Catching' punches with the pad
- Not offering any counterpunches from pads

## ▼ TYPES OF PADWORK

### **Set Technique**

A particular punch, defence or sequence is practiced. Initially at a slow speed which is increased as the skill develops.

### **General padwork**

A boxer's skills are generally tidied up whilst some conditioning work is done.

### **Tactical**

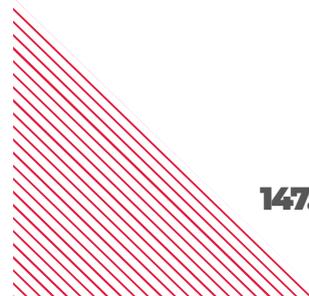
The coach and his pads will usually simulate a particular style of opponent whilst strategies and techniques are developed to overcome such opponents.

### **Sharpening**

A pre-contest warm up or at a time very close to a contest (in the 'taper') where a boxer is mentally preparing for combat, not pushing themselves hard, and sharpening skills and developing speed.

### **Conditioning**

The focus is on high work rate. The boxer will often be working in the anaerobic zone. An 'interval approach' is taken. Work time will vary. One minute rounds with 30 seconds rest being common.







## SECTION 20

### SKIPPING

You can walk into any boxing gym in the country and you will hear a few familiar sounds. A ringing bell, the thud of fists hitting punchbags... and the whirr of a skipping rope cutting through the air coupled with the rhythm of feet landing on the floor. skipping is a staple in a typical boxer's conditioning programme... but why?

#### ▼ BENEFITS OF SKIPPING

##### Skipping can improve:

- Coordination
- Agility
- Balance
- Quickness
- Footwork
- Cardio respiratory endurance
- Muscular endurance

These benefits are particularly true for the novice boxer. However it should also be borne in mind that the benefits are reduced once a boxer becomes a very proficient skipper. If this is the case the skipping programme needs to be modified and it's intensity increased.

#### ▼ WHICH ROPE?

The rope needs to be of the correct length. As a guide, if the boxer stands on the middle of the rope with both feet together the handles should reach the armpits.

Younger beginners will benefit best from a lighter plastic rope (commonly known as a speed rope) However these are less durable and prone to both rapid wear and sudden breakage in cold weather. Leather ropes are far more durable and their additional weight makes them more appropriate for senior boxers and experienced younger boxers.



## ▼ INSTRUCTING BEGINNERS

### **It is difficult to teach someone how to skip!**

The coach can demonstrate the technique and make the following key points:

- Choose the correct length
- Stand in the middle of your rope. The handles should reach just under your armpits
- Don't tie knots in ropes – have handles adjusted

### **Arm Position**

- Stand with elbows close to body
- Point hands outwards horizontally
- Hands should be about 20cm away from body

### **Hand Movement**

- Move hands back up and over in a circular motion
- Simultaneously swivel the wrists
- Keep wrists at about waist height in front of the body

### **Jumping**

- Stand up straight with knees slightly bent, shoulders back and head up
- Jump approx. 5cm off the ground on the balls of the feet with arms slightly in front of hips
- Learn to jump with a double bounce (a normal jump followed by a rebound jump)
- Progress to single bounce from double bounce

## ▼ SKIPPING TRAINING SESSIONS

### **The following are examples of skipping sessions:**

- a) 5 X 1 minute rounds with 1 minute recovery – Suitable for children beginning to learn skipping
- b) 15 minutes non stop – Suitable for seniors in the pre and early season
- c) 4 x 2 minute rounds with 1 minute recovery – Suitable for most novice boxers in early to mid season
- d) 4 x 3 minute rounds with 1 minute recovery – Suitable for most intermediate and open class boxers early to mid season
- e) 8 x 1 minute rounds with 30 seconds recovery – Skipping with an 'interval' approach for conditioning of senior boxers

## ▼ ADVANCED SKILLS

Many boxers take real pride in their skipping skills. Complex skipping routines are very much a *badge of honour* in the boxing gym!

### **The following instructions can be used to support boxers as they attempt to enhance their skipping skills.**

#### **Side Swing**

1. Put your hands together, while holding the handles, and swing the rope from one side of your body to the other.
2. Keep repeating step 1.
3. When you are ready, open your hands. Swing the rope down and jump.

#### **Skier**

1. Jump side to side like you're skiing down a steep hill.

#### **Tuck Jump**

1. Do tuck jumps/jumping jacks as you skip.

#### **Ali Shuffle**

1. Jump with one foot in front and the other in back.
2. Jump and switch the positions of your feet.

#### **Doubles**

During every jump, turn the rope at high speed such that two turns of the rope accompany each jump.



## Heel Exchange

1. Jump and touch your heel to the ground in front of you.
2. Switch feet and touch the other heel to the ground in front of you.
3. Keep repeating steps 1 and 2.

## Toe Exchange

1. Jump and touch your toe to the ground behind you.
2. Switch feet and touch the other toe to the ground behind you.
3. Keep repeating steps 1 and 2.

## Reverse Skipping

Just turn the rope backwards. Lifting the toes will help the rope to turn without falling on the feet.

## Front Cross

1. With the first turn of the rope jump a regular jump.
2. With the second turn of the rope cross your arms and jump through the loop that you made with the rope.

## Behind the Back Cross

You need to be really flexible for this one.

1. Start with a single bounce.
2. When you cross, cross with both arms behind your back.
3. Jump the rope and quickly uncross your arms.
4. Your arms should have gone behind your back while you jumped the rope.

## Stance Skipping

1. Get in to your normal boxing stance.
2. Skip and move the feet in all directions as if you were shadow boxing.

## Squat Skipping

Rather than skipping in the upright position, bend the legs at the knees and skip in the squat position. Move the arms out to the side a little and commence skipping. This is hard work!

## ▼ HOW TO THEME THE SKIPPING

Boxers left to skip on their own with no advice or instruction will tend to just plod along going through the motions. The proactive coach should theme the skipping as he or she would for most other aspects of training.

### Examples:

- a) Tempo change: the numbers 1, 2 or 3 are called 1 meaning slow skipping, 3 meaning skipping as fast as possible, 2 being the medium pace.
- b) Within a round of skipping: 30 seconds on left leg only, 30 seconds on right, 30 seconds high knees, 30 seconds double turns of the rope per jump.
- c) One round steady skipping, one round stance skipping, one round squat skipping, one round speed skipping.
- d) Follow the leader: a boxer is selected to lead the skipping and the rest of the group try to follow them.



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# SECTION 21

## SECONDING AND MATCHING

Looking after the boxer on the day of a contest and particularly during the contest are known as seconding. The level I (assistant coach) is allowed to 'corner' or second a boxer, subject to being appropriately registered and in possession of their coaching identity card.

### ▼ THE RIGHT BOUT FOR THE RIGHT BOXER

**Competition is the essence of the sport of amateur boxing and is of two main types:**

#### **Open competition**

where the opponent will depend on the 'luck of the draw' in any weight class and age group. For those with the potential to become Elite performers open competition is essential.

#### **Matched competition**

On inter-club shows where age, weight, experience, style and ability are taken into account and the record of the opponent is known or can be verified.

Many young and novice boxers will reach a standard where open competition is a good route to developing skills and increasing experience.

For the majority of young and novice boxers matching on club shows is the best option but entails a major investment of time and energy and a good network of trusted matchmakers from other clubs in seeking out appropriate opponents.

### ▼ THE KNOWLEDGE

**The wise coach, with the welfare of the boxer at the forefront of their thoughts will:**

- Have knowledge of rules and procedures on which the competition is based i.e. size of ring, regulations on handwraps, number of judges, scoring system, number of bouts and running order, where the medicals are being carried out.
- Have knowledge of correct weight making and hydration strategies in the run up to the competition and on the day.
- Know of how to get the boxer to the competition in peak condition both physically and mentally.
- Know where the event is being held, how to get there and what time is needed to weigh-in and prepare in such a way that the boxer has every advantage within the rules.



## ▼ PREPARATION IN THE GYM

### **The wise coach will:**

- Use correct tapering (the reduction in intensity of training as competition approaches) and sharpening in training so that the boxer doesn't leave his or her best performance in the gym.
- Taking account of individual needs – each boxer is different and needs individual physical and psychological preparation. Previous contest experience be an influencing factor.
- Have some knowledge of the known or potential opponent and work on the tactics to be employed through conditioned and open sparring.
- Carry out 'test weigh-ins' to monitor the boxer's weight before and after training.
- Give advice on diet and hydration as appropriate.

## ▼ TRAVEL AND ARRIVAL AT THE VENUE

### **Prior to setting out for the venue the coach should:**

- Know the venue address, distance, ticket arrangements for spectators
- Be sure of weigh-in times and boxing start times
- Ensure the matching has been done carefully so that the bout is fair in terms of experience, weight, age and ability; and in the case of junior boxers that the rules on age limits and weight allowances are observed.
- Establish the roles of the coaches and agree them beforehand.
- Check the coach's own equipment (towels, water bottle etc.) ensuring that everything that is needed is provided, and is clean and in good repair. Making sure that enough skipping ropes, spare gloves and coaching pads are available for the warm up.
- Check the essential equipment of the boxer(s) – i.e. personal equipment including shorts, vest and boots, protector, handwraps, mouthguard, headguard (colour?)
- Ensuring that the boxer has the mouthguard and the coach has the boxer's medical card for the medical exam. If the young boxer has braces on the teeth and an adapted mouthguard ensure that the necessary authorisation letter from the orthodontist is available for the doctor.
- Ensure that all coaches have their own accreditation documents as applicable.
- Ensure that there is access to appropriate food and water for the boxer(s) after the weigh-in.



## ▼ PRE-BOUT

### Have established routines including:

- After the weigh-in, if appropriate, re-hydrate, fuel and relax the boxer – perhaps taking a walk outside to get into the correct mindset, taking into account any superstitions on the part of the boxer.
- Ensure that enough time is set aside for changing and bandaging the hands and that the bandages have been inspected and stamped (in championships).
- Leading an individual warm-up which relates to the opponent, the size of ring etc.

## ▼ DURING THE BOUT

- Focus intensely on the bout. Your actions can have a massive affect on the outcome of the bout.
- Watch the opponent, round by round, work out the strengths, and weaknesses, advise your own boxer and continually re-assess the tactics being used.
- Help your boxer to solve the problems posed by the opponent and impose him/herself on the bout by taking the initiative.
- Get into the ring quickly and get the boxer into the preferred rest position (sitting or standing). Carry out the agreed corner drill with the fellow coach/second (washing mouthguard etc.)
- Check for injuries and assess their effect on performance.
- Give advice in the form of one or two key coaching points (no more!) repeated two or three times.
- Predict opponent's response to the strategy you and your boxer are employing.
- Have the other coach monitor the time elapsed. Replace the mouthguard and leave the ring in due time so as not to distract the boxer.

## ▼ POST-BOUT

- Deal with injury, concussion etc. together with event medical staff and ensure that any boxer who has suffered RSCH or has taken heavy head shots is escorted appropriately (home or hospital). If the boxer is escorted home ensure that the procedures for dealing with post concussion trauma are well understood.
- Cool down the boxer and supervise a light stretch – especially if in a multi-day competition.
- Deal with any complaints or queries with the OIC (Official In Charge), Club Secretary or the Head Coach.
- Retrieve the boxer's medical card from the Recorder once it has been properly marked up.
- Analyse the performance (in outline) but save the inquest for later!





# SECTION 22

## CORE STABILITY

Core stability is the buzz word in boxing fitness. Why? Because the 'core' is the origin of movement and the foundation for safe and dynamic performance.

It provides central body control, and allows you to generate power by maximising the efficiency of your muscular effort. Core stability is the foundation for explosive movements and control (agility, balance and co-ordination), qualities vital in boxing.

**It is the ability of your trunk to support the effort and forces from your arms and legs, so that muscles and joints can perform in their safest, strongest and most effective position.**

In boxing terms, you become more stable when attacked, and solid in your ability to attack.

**By training specifically for core stability, you gain a number of benefits:**

- Greater capacity for speed generation
- More efficient use of muscle power
- Decreased injury risk
- Increased ability to change direction, as body momentum is controlled
- Improved balance and muscular co-ordination
- Improved posture

**In a nutshell, your body can function more effectively with less risk**

## ▼ NEUTRAL POSTURE

A fundamental component of core stability and core stability training is 'neutral posture' - this allows your muscles to perform efficiently and reduces your risk of injury.

**To help find neutral, draw yourself up from the crown of your head, as if you were being lifted by a helium balloon**

Neutral alignment should be maintained for the most effective use of stabilising and mobilising muscles. Poor posture is the root of many preventable sports injuries and weak performance. Identifying signs are excessive arch in the lower back and slouching - both are side effects of weak core musculature.



## ▼ OBJECTIVES OF CORE TRAINING

The main aim of core training and in particular core stability is to train the trunk muscles and then control your lumbar spine position during exercise. Many see core training and core stability as a fad, however what sets it apart from many of the previous fads is that it is a truly worthwhile part of the conditioning programme of an amateur boxer

So what is core training? Quite simply, it is performing exercises for the central part of your body - in particular your abdominals and lower back. The reason that core training so important is that these muscles are involved in a major way in any sport and activity you care to name.

Strengthening this area is relatively simple and should be apart of the programme for all boxers. A reasonable variety of abdominal and lower back exercises performed three or four times a week will provide all the strength and conditioning needed. The beauty of working this area is that they are is an almost infinite variety of options available. There are numerous machines that will strengthen the muscles of the abdomen and lower back, hundreds of different possibilities you can do on the mats, and now there is also the option of working with a Swiss Ball.



## THE PLANK



## THE SIDE PLANK



## THE GLUTEAL BRIDGE





## ACTIVE STRAIGHT LEG RAISE



## LYING WINDSCREEN WIPERS



## SIMPLE SUPERMAN





## HARD SUPERMAN



## BALL PLANK ROLL



## BALL BALANCE





## BALL IN AND OUT LEG ROLL



## BALL GLUTEAL BRIDGE



## BALL WALLS ROLLS





## BALL PASSOVERS



## BALL CRUNCH



## BALL PRESS UP







# SECTION 23

## SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY

Sports psychology is a vast and rapidly changing field of expertise. It is an area of study that has largely been neglected in boxing and yet it is a sport in which the correct attitude and mindset is absolutely crucial in performance.

The boxing coach certainly needs to have an overview of the principles involved and he or she needs to be able to employ a range of strategies to develop performance in the athletes within their care.

The stress of competition can cause a boxer to react both physically and mentally in a manner that can negatively affect their performance abilities. They may become tense, their heart rates race, they break into a cold sweat, they worry about the outcome of the competition, they worry about getting hurt. They find it hard to concentrate on the task in hand.

This has led coaches to take an increasing interest in the sport psychology and in particular in the area of competitive anxiety. That interest has focused on techniques that boxers can use in the competitive situation to maintain control and optimise their performance. Once learned, these techniques allow the boxer to relax and to focus his/her attention in a positive manner on the task of preparing for and participating in competition. Psychology is another weapon in the boxer's armoury in gaining the winning edge.

### ▼ KEY PRINCIPLES FOR THE COACH

#### **The coach should:**

- Have a clearly considered and developed coaching philosophy
- Confidently base decisions on their philosophy
- Be self aware
- Focus on personal excellence in themselves
- Focus on personal excellence in their athletes
- Communicate effectively and regularly
- Reward effort and performance and not outcome
- Give instructional feedback and not criticism
- Listen and be empathetic
- Resolve conflict by confrontation in which your perspective and feelings are calmly explained

## ▼ THE FOUR Cs

Concentration, confidence, control and commitment (the 4C's) are generally considered the main mental qualities that are important for successful performance in most sports.

**Concentration** - ability to maintain focus

**Confidence** - believe in one's abilities

**Control** - ability to maintain emotional control regardless of distraction

**Commitment** - ability to continue working to agreed goals

### CONCENTRATION

This is the mental quality to focus on the task in hand. If the boxer lacks concentration then their abilities will not be effectively or efficiently applied to the task.

**Research has identified the following types of attention focus:**

- **Broad / Narrow continuum** - the focus is on a large or small number of stimuli
- **Internal / External continuum** - the focus is on internal stimuli (feelings) or external stimuli (the opponent)

The demand for concentration varies within sport. In boxing it is absolutely vital. A momentary lapse of concentration can result in early defeat.

- **Sustained concentration** - distance running, cycling, tennis, squash
- **Short bursts of concentration** - cricket, golf, shooting, athletic field events
- **Intense concentration** - sprinting events, bobsleigh, skiing, boxing

#### Common distractions are:

Anxiety, mistakes, fatigue, unfamiliar surroundings, public announcements, coach, friends, opponent, negative thoughts etc.

Strategies to improve concentration are very personal. One way to maintain focus is to set process goals for each session or competition. The boxer will have an overall goal for which they will identify a number of process goals that help focus on specific aspects of the task. For each of these goals the boxer can use a trigger word (a word which instantly refocuses the boxer's concentration to the goal) e.g. punching technique requires the boxer to focus on being relaxed, smooth and to drive from the hips - trigger word could be 'technique!'

Boxers will develop a routine for competition that may include the night before, the morning, pre competition, competition and post competition routines. If these routines are appropriately structured then they can prove a useful aid to concentration.

### CONFIDENCE

Confidence results from the comparison that a boxer makes between the goal and their ability. The boxer will have self-confidence if they believe they can achieve their goal. ('You only achieve what you believe!')

When an athlete has self-confidence they will tend to: persevere even when things are not going to plan, show enthusiasm, be positive in their approach and take their share of the responsibility in success and fail.



## CONTROL

Identifying when a boxer feels a particular emotion and understanding the reason for the feelings is an important stage of helping an athlete gain emotional control. A boxer's ability to maintain control of their emotions in the face of adversity and remain positive is essential to successful performance. Two emotions that are often associated with poor performance are anxiety and anger... particularly so in boxing.

Anxiety comes in two forms - physical (butterflies, sweating, nausea, needing the toilet) and mental (worry, negative thoughts, confusion, lack of concentration). Relaxation is a technique that can be used to reduce anxiety.

When a boxer becomes angry, the cause of the anger often becomes the focus of attention. This then leads to a lack of concentration on the task, performance deteriorates and confidence in ability is lost which fuels the anger - a slippery slope to failure.

## COMMITMENT

Performance in the ring depends on the boxer being fully committed to numerous goals over many years. In competition with these goals the boxer will have many aspects of daily life to manage. The many competing interests and commitments include work, studies, family/partner, friends, social life and other hobbies/sports

### Within sport, commitment can be undermined by:

- A perceived lack of progress or improvement
- Not being sufficiently involved in developing the training program
- Not understanding the objectives of the training program
- Injury
- Lack of enjoyment
- Anxiety about performance - competition
- Becoming bored
- Coach and boxer not working as a team
- Lack of commitment by other boxers

Many people (coach, medical support team, manager, friends, etc.) can contribute to a boxers levels of commitment with appropriate levels of support and positive feedback, especially during times of injury, illness and poor performance.

## ▼ PRAISE, CRITICISM AND FEEDBACK

### Praise

Express warm approval or admiration

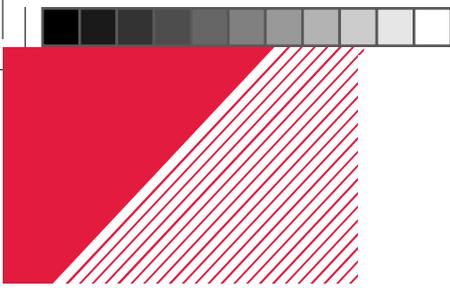
### Criticism

Expression of disapproval of someone or something on the basis of perceived faults or mistakes

### Feedback

Reactions and communication to a person's performance of a task, etc. which is used as a basis for improvement.

- Praise what is praiseworthy. Do not praise what is not praiseworthy – build trust
- Use the 'praise sandwich' – Use thick bread
- Tell the boxer how to make it 'even better'
- Praise to criticism ratio should be at least 5:1
- Ask the boxer for their thoughts, opinions and emotions
- Teach new skills to replace faulty skills
- Use video footage to illustrate performance issues
- Be specific and use appropriate language
- Do not 'dissect' losses immediately after a performance – allow negative emotions to recede



## ▼ STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING MENTAL TOUGHNESS AND 'THE FOUR Cs'

### TARGET SETTING

Have you ever set yourself an unattainable goal? How did you feel when you didn't achieve it?

#### Goal setting can develop...

- Positive self-perception
- Reduce anxiety
- Optimal performance
- Improve confidence
- Increase motivation

#### Short-term goals

- Give immediate success.
- Set initially at the level of the performer
- Goals can become progressively more difficult.
- Link between performers initial capability and long-term goal of achievement- what they want and when they want it?
- The most effective goals (according to research) are **short-term**...

#### Medium term goals

- Medium term goals are closely linked to both short-term and long-term goals
- Medium goal achievement usually dependant on effectiveness of short-term goals

#### Long-term goals

- The ultimate aim, but realistic and appropriate
- Takes an extended period to achieve.
- Major behavioural changes, however cannot be achieved through long-term goals alone
- Long-term goals are daunting- why?

#### Process goals

- Concerned with improving techniques to produce a better performance
- e.g. improving footwork
- Improving specific punch
- Adding to defence repertoire

#### Performance goals

- Based on judgements made of an individual against their previous performances
- Performance goals must be **measurable**
- Bench press 50Kg twelve times in one minute
- Throw 50 punches in each sparring round over four two minute rounds

#### Product goals

Sometimes called **Outcome goals**

- Defeating other competitors
- Winning a percentage of bouts?
- Become regional Elite champion?
- Winning an Olympic medal?

#### Problems associated with product goals

- Totally focussing on product goals can leave a performer anxious and de-motivated as the athlete is required to win to achieve a goal.
- Product goals are often heavily influenced by external and therefore are out of a performers control, another cause of anxiety.
- Winning is often determined by the luck of the draw





## ▼ RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

- Get some fresh air
- Listen to music
- Watch a DVD
- Talk to friends about something other than boxing
- Reading
- Yoga
- Pilates

### **Breathing control**

- Inhale slowly and deeply, filling your chest with air, counting four seconds to yourself 'One and two and three and four'. Imagine your chest slowly filling with air. Your stomach should expand.
- When you have inhaled fully, hold your breath for another four seconds, again counting to yourself: 'One and two and three and four'. This should be just a comfortable pause.
- Let the air out through your mouth slowly saying to yourself: 'Easy...easy... easy... easy.' Let as much air as you can out of your lungs. Feel yourself relaxing as you do. Feel your shoulders, chest and diaphragm letting go and imagine releasing all the tension.

### **Progressive muscular relaxation**

- Progressive muscular relaxation involves the active contracting and relaxing of muscles
- When a muscle is tightened for four-six seconds and then relaxed, the muscle returns to a more relaxed state
- This process should be performed for the following parts of the body in turn – feet, legs, thighs, buttocks, stomach, back, neck, shoulders, arms, hands, jaw, face and eyes.



## ▼ IMAGERY

Imagery is a form of simulation training where experiences are created or recreated in the mind. It is an experience similar to a sensory experience but arising in the absence of the usual external stimuli

### Mental imagery can be used to:

- Familiarise the athlete with a competition site, a race course, a complex play pattern or routine etc.
- Motivate the athlete by recalling images of their goals for that session, or of success in a past competition or beating a competitor in competition.
- Perfect skills or skill sequences the athlete is learning or refining.
- Reduce negative thoughts by focusing on positive outcomes.
- Refocus the athlete when the need arises e.g. if performance is feeling sluggish, imagery of a previous best performance or previous best event focus can help get things back on track.
- See success where the athlete sees themselves performing skills correctly and the desired outcomes.
- Set the stage for performance with a complete mental run through of the key elements of their performance to set the athlete's desired pre-competition feelings and focus.

### True Imagery and not just visualisation

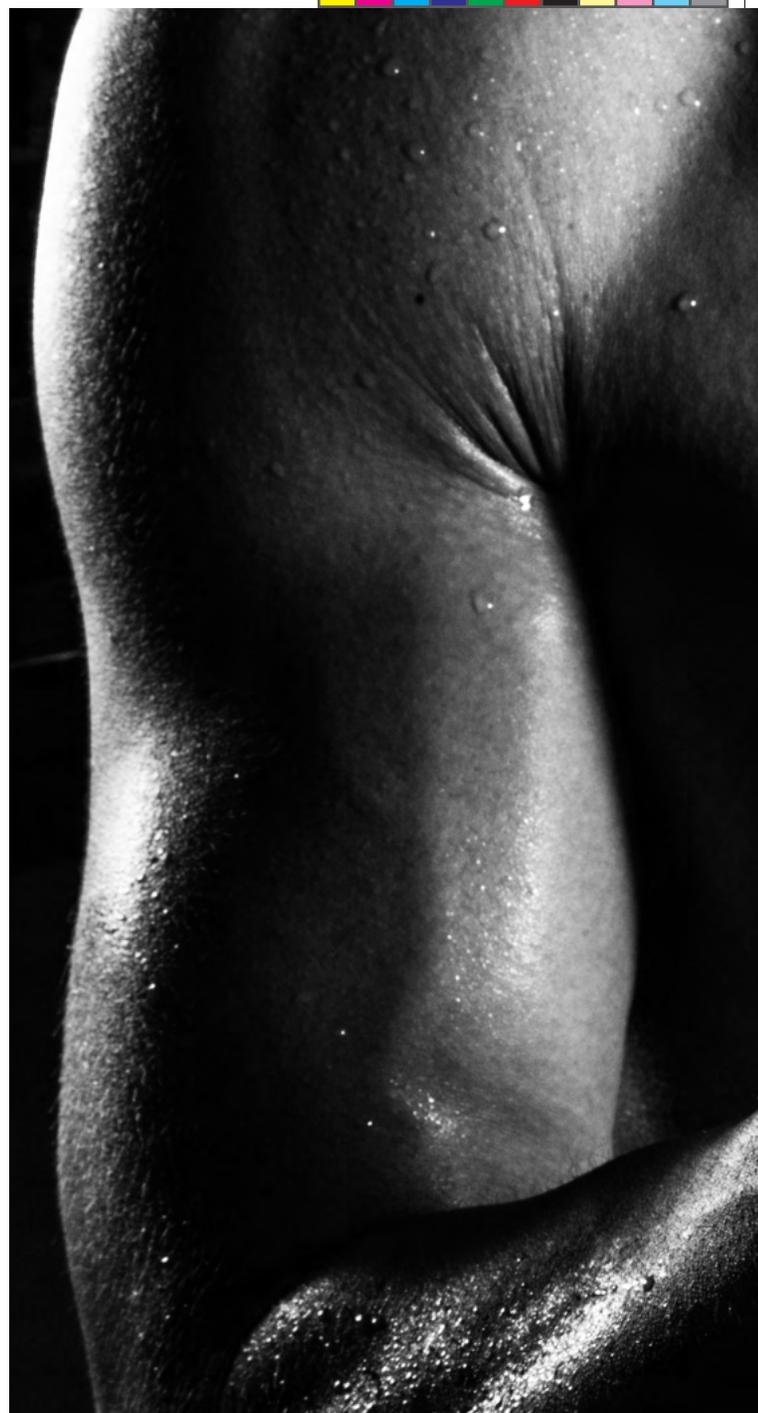
- Visualization is limited to two senses – what you see and what you hear.
- Imagery involves all five senses: sight, sound, taste, smell, touch/feel.
- Imagery is enhanced when we use all the senses.

Mental imagery involves the boxer imagining themselves in an environment performing a specific activity using all of their senses (sight, hear, feel and smell). The images should have the boxer performing successfully and feeling satisfied with their performance. Mental imagery should not focus on the outcome but on the actions to achieve the desired outcome.

To become proficient in the use of imagery it has to be used it ever day: on your way to training, during training and after training. In every training session, before you execute any skill or combination of skills, first do it in imagery. See, feel, and experience yourself moving through the actions in your mind, as you would like them actually to unfold. In the competition situation use imagery before the start of the event and see yourself performing successfully/ winning.

### Why does it work?

- Imagined events have a similar effect on the nervous system and mental processes as actual events
- The brain can't tell the difference between vividly imagined events and the real thing.





## ▼ POSITIVE SELF-TALK AND MANTRAS

All day long, most people have a running dialogue with themselves. If you actually stop and listen to these messages, you may wonder how you accomplish anything at all. How many times in a given day do you find yourself mentally rehearsing the worst possible outcome, or telling yourself you can't do something, or it's too hard?

Getting a handle on our self talk is one of the hardest things many of us will attempt, whether we box or not. In fact, developing positive self talk is at the heart of success for many. For a boxer, negative internal messages and thoughts are among the biggest contributors to poor performance in the ring. Every time a negative thought enters your head replace it instantly with a 'mantra'.

### Examples

**My opponent has huge muscles**

**I AM STRONG, I AM STRONG, I AM STRONG**

**She is the national champion**

**I WILL BE THE NEW CHAMPION, I WILL BE THE NEW CHAMPION, I WILL BE THE NEW CHAMPION**

**I could fail my assessment**

**I AM A GREAT COACH, I AM A GREAT COACH, I AM A GREAT COACH, I AM A GREAT COACH**





# SECTION 24

## PLANNING THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The purpose of a Training Programme is to identify the work to be carried out to achieve agreed objectives. For Olympic level performers training programmes should be drawn up to identify long-term (four years) objectives as well as short-term plans for the forthcoming season.

In its simplest form the plan can comprise a single, A4 sheet identifying the overall plan for the year. The training year is then usually broken up into training periods of several weeks, known as a microcycle.

### ▼ INFORMATION GATHERING

**The first stage of preparing a training plan is to gather background information about a boxer and the objectives for the forthcoming season. The sort of information to collect is as follows:**

#### **Personal details**

- Name, address, date of birth, telephone numbers, transport arrangements
- Objectives
- Performance record
- Technical ability
- Competitions for which the boxer is eligible
- Competitors
- What can be learned from last season – good and bad aspects

#### **Athlete's other commitments**

- School, college, work, part time jobs
- Family and partner
- Hobbies and other sports
- Time available for training
- Planned holidays

#### **Medical**

- Previous injuries or illness
- Current problems
- Access to medical support
- Physiotherapy support
- On any medication - is it a banned substance?

#### **Training facilities**

- Club gym facilities
- Running areas
- Regional and national squad training
- Swimming pools, saunas and massage

#### **Key questions for the boxer**

- How serious are you about your sport?
- What do you expect from your coach?



## ▼ ANALYSIS OF THE LAST PROGRAMME

If this is not the first programme you have generated with the boxer then an important activity to conduct is a SWOT analysis of the last training programme:

### STRENGTHS

- What were the best aspects of the programme and why?
- What did we do well and why?

### WEAKNESSES

- Are there gaps in the programme?
- What did we not do very well and why?

### OPPORTUNITIES

- How can we enhance the program to the benefit of the athlete?

### THREATS

- What may prevent us achieving the short and long-term objectives?

## ▼ BOXER ASSESSMENT

Before we can start to create a training programme we need to analyse our boxer to determine their strengths and weaknesses. The first step is to identify the ideal attributes (e.g. body build, strength, endurance, speed, flexibility etc.) that will allow our boxer to achieve their agreed competition goals. The next step is to assess our boxer against our ideal, to identify their strengths and weaknesses (gap analysis). Addressing the gaps may require us to think in terms of long-term planning (several years?) but for this macrocycle we can set realistic but challenging goals to start to address the gaps.

**England Boxing use a system know as 'RAGG' ratings (red, amber, green, gold)**





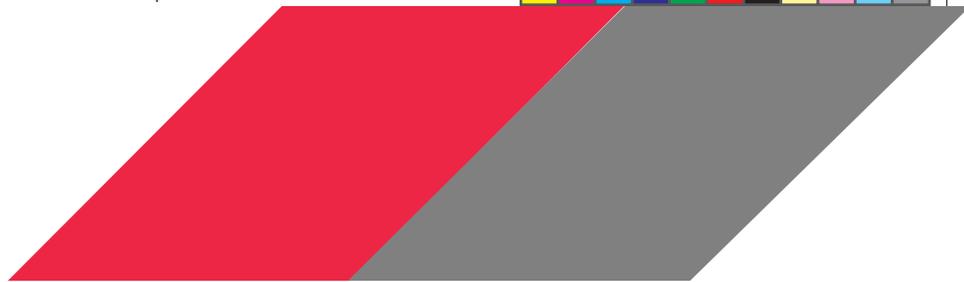
	DEFINITION	POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS	NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS	RAGG RATING
<b>ABILITY TO READ AN OPPONENT</b>	Is able to notice subtle changes in their opponent and apply necessary skills to exploit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates positive body language</li> <li>• Notices and is able to articulate subtle changes in opponent during brief / contest</li> <li>• Maximises opportunities to throw punches when available</li> <li>• Can read opponent quickly and adapt</li> <li>• Creates opportunities using feints and phasing attack</li> <li>• Ability to keep to a plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can't identify opponents</li> <li>• Makes poor decisions and is unable to articulate why</li> <li>• Has negative body language</li> <li>• Unable to change without direction from the corner</li> </ul>	...
<b>TEMPO</b>	Is able to dictate the speed of the contest with hands and feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows an intermittent pace with a strong finish throughout rounds</li> <li>• Always looks to start at the right pace</li> <li>• Controls the speed of the bout</li> <li>• Paces the rounds well – consistent phases</li> <li>• Is able to adjust pace when required and finishes rounds strongly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stays one paced</li> <li>• Starts too fast and blows</li> <li>• Starts too slowly</li> <li>• Has their tempo controlled by opponent</li> <li>• Observably loses the last 30 seconds of each round</li> </ul>	...
<b>TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE</b>	Has an ability to take on board tactics and adapt where necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows brief where appropriate</li> <li>• Contributes effectively in briefings</li> <li>• Is able to switch to 'plan B' when instructed</li> <li>• Can work out a situation and adapt</li> <li>• Switching of attack</li> <li>• Effective with dealing with opposite stance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blames others for tactical mistakes</li> <li>• Doesn't adapt to varying situations</li> <li>• Is unable to stick to tactics – deviates from plan</li> <li>• Can't explain why they conceded shots</li> <li>• Doesn't listen to advice</li> </ul>	...
<b>RING AWARENESS</b>	Is able to know where they are in the ring at all times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controls the centre of the ring and contest</li> <li>• Moves in all directions</li> <li>• Always has spaces behind them</li> <li>• Dictates where their opponent is in the ring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finds themselves on the ropes consistently</li> <li>• Continuously moves one way</li> <li>• Allows their opponent to dictate control of the contest</li> </ul>	...





	DEFINITION	POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS	NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS	RAGG RATING
<b>RESILIENCE</b>	Is able to bounce back from adversity, reflect logically on performance and constantly search for solutions to setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stays consistent in behaviours regardless of selection</li> <li>Keeps things in perspective</li> <li>Remains positive in adversity through searching for solutions</li> <li>Reflects on poor performances logically</li> <li>Is able to switch on and off from boxing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holds on to negative thoughts leading to unstable confidence</li> <li>Doesn't take responsibility for poor performances</li> <li>Dwells on mistakes</li> <li>Sulks</li> <li>Gets on the emotional rollercoaster</li> <li>Does just enough</li> </ul>	...
<b>GRIT</b>	Is self-determined in the pursuit of their goals, leave no stone unturned in the process and has a high need to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pushes their physical limits</li> <li>Sets challenging goals and reflects on progress logically</li> <li>Takes responsibility for performances</li> <li>Always looking for extra help or assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets goals within limits</li> <li>Has to be motivated externally</li> <li>Appears happy with second place</li> <li>Seems to lack interest</li> <li>Doesn't listen</li> </ul>	...
<b>TEMPERAMENT</b>	Has an open mindset, operates well in the environment and is comfortable in their own skin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has high levels of coachability (eager to listen and learn)</li> <li>Is open to feedback and criticism</li> <li>Has high self-awareness (knows what makes them tick and their impact on self and environment)</li> <li>Is open to new challenges</li> <li>Is consistent in their routines and psychological preparation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes feedback personally</li> <li>Is fixed in their views</li> <li>Stays in their shell</li> <li>Does the basics well under pressure</li> </ul>	...
<b>METHOD</b>	Has clarity over style and strategy, whilst taking confidence from knowing how they box and their psychological preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes confidence from their approach and style</li> <li>Can clearly articulate how they want to box and back it up with behaviour</li> <li>Does the basics well under pressure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has no consistency in their approach</li> <li>Isn't able to articulate how they want to box</li> <li>'Reverts to type' under pressure (back to old habits)</li> </ul>	...
<b>MINDSET</b>	Is able to stay calm under pressure, exhibits control over their emotions and thrives in adversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stays calm</li> <li>Can dictate and choose their mindset (positive and aggressive or relaxed and focussed)</li> <li>Reacts logically</li> <li>Keeps their shape under pressure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gets frustrated with R&amp;J's</li> <li>Gets caught with shots and looks for a fight</li> <li>Has poor control over thinking</li> <li>Flits from moment to moment</li> <li>Is fixed in their views and responds negatively to feedback</li> </ul>	...





## Periodisation

Periodisation is the method of organising the training year into phases where each phase has its specific aims for the development of the boxer. Typically each season will have a peak.

### The phases of a training year

**It is often convenient to divide the training year into six phases:**

- Phase 1 – Closed season July, August
- Phase 2 – Pre season August, September
- Phase 3 – Early season October, November
- Phase 4 – Mid season December, January, March, April
- Phase 5 – Peak season April, May
- Phase 6 – Active recovery June

This model assumes that the competition climax is the May senior Elite championships.

The spread of the various championships means that peak season will vary from boxer to boxer across age and experience ranges. International boxers will of course have very different phases.

**Perhaps for most 'club' boxers the season can be seen in much simpler terms**

- Phase 1 – Closed season June, July
- Phase 2 – Pre season August, September
- Phase 3 – Competition season October to May

### Objectives of each phase

**The objectives of each phase will often be as follows:**

- Phase 1 – Some rest followed by general development of strength, mobility, endurance and basic technique
- Phase 2 - Development of specific fitness and advanced technical skills
- Phase 3 - Competition experience
- Phase 4 - Adjustment of technical model, preparation for the main competition
- Phase 5 – Championship boxing
- Phase 6 - Active recovery - planning preparation for next season

### Activities of each phase

**The athlete's physical needs that require development are:**

- Basic body Conditioning
- General and Specific Strength
- General and Specific Technique
- General and Specific Mobility
- General and Specific Endurance
- Speed

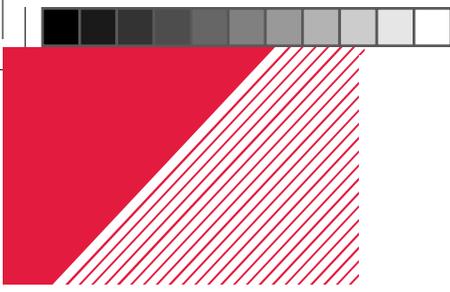
Each of these needs should be seen as a building block, where specific blocks need to be in place before you progress to the next. Failure to do this may result in injury. How you allocate the blocks to each phase depends upon the boxer's weaknesses and strengths and is for you as the coach to decide with the boxer.

**One approach is to progress the building blocks as follows:**

- Basic body conditioning
- General strength, endurance, mobility and technique
- Specific strength, endurance, mobility and technique
- Speed

When progressing from one block to the next, remember to fade one out as the other comes in and not to switch from one block to the next overnight. Some blocks once started may continue to the end of the season but at a less intense level e.g. mobility. Other blocks to consider are relaxation, visualisation and psychology (mental attitude).





## ▼ PREPARING A PLAN

### The steps in producing a training plan are as follows:

- Gathering information
- Produce an overall plan template and identify the months/weeks of the year

### Identify on the plan:

- Dates for the main competitions
- Club tournaments to be targeted
- The six phases based on the main competition in phase 5

### Identify on the plan:

- The blocks (e.g. the skills, strength, endurance etc.) to be developed in each phase
  - The period of development for each block
  - The intensity of training week by week
  - Number of training sessions per week
  - Evaluation points to monitor progress
- 
- Identify appropriate training units for each block as appropriate to the phase of development.
  - Group the training units for each block into training schedules taking into consideration the number of training sessions the boxer can complete each week, the required training intensity and the phase of development.

## ▼ OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

As a boxer matures, they are not only developing in terms of the sport but also in terms of education, career, physical maturity and their relationships with those around them. A boxer may face several transitions during their full career. Perhaps the critical transition occurs around the ages of 16-18 when they may be:

- Moving to university/college or commencing in full time employment
- Progressing to senior competition
- Maturing through adolescence
- Establishing relationships with a partner

Coaches must take into consideration these transitions when planning the annual and long-term training programs for their boxers.

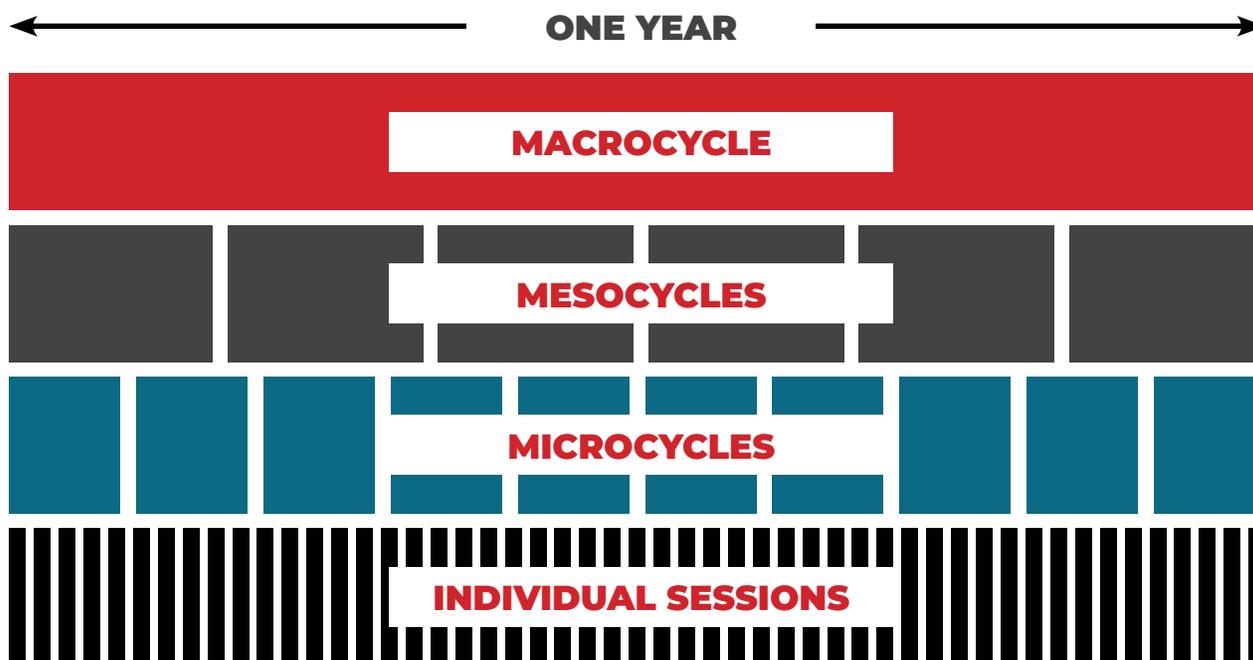
## ▼ WHAT IS A MACROCYCLE, MESOCYCLE, MICROCYCLE?

Macrocycle is a long period of time (typically 12 months) defining the available preparation time up to a major competition. It could be up to four years for an Olympian!

This can be divided into developmental periods called mesocycles. A mesocycle is usually four-six weeks in duration and has a specific objective e.g. general preparation, specific preparation, competition.

A microcycle is a shorter training period of about seven days and includes more detailed information on the intensity, frequency, duration and sequencing of the training sessions.





## ▼ WHAT ARE A TRAINING UNIT AND A TRAINING SESSION?

A training unit is a single activity (e.g. 4 x 2 minute rounds of sparring or three sets of a circuit training schedule). A training session is made up of one or more training units e.g. warm-up unit, technique unit, speed endurance unit and a cool-down unit.

## ▼ WHAT IS A TRAINING SCHEDULE?

A training schedule (microcycle) comprises of a number of training sessions that can span from seven to 10 days.

## ▼ GOAL SETTING

Goal setting is a simple, yet often misused motivational technique that can provide some structure for training and competition programme. Goals give a focus, and there are two well known acronyms to guide goal setting.

### F.I.T.T.A. Principles

The basic principles of training are summed up in the acronym F.I.T.T.A.

**F** - Frequency - how often

**I** - Intensity - how hard

**T** - Time - how long

**T** - Type - the type of training (strength, endurance etc.)

**A** - Adherence – the whole thing is pointless unless the athlete sticks to the plan

Details of goal setting can be found in the sports psychology section

## ▼ TRAINING AGES

When developing a training program it is important, especially for young athletes, to take into consideration the athlete's:

**Chronological age** - age from date of birth

**Development age** - physical, mental and emotional development

**Training age** - number of years they have been seriously training





# NOTES







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