

Getting to grips with boxing



By Leon Carter - Sports Officer (Primary Schools & Workplaces), Active Sussex

'Are you carded, pal?'

'Erm, no.' I replied.

'Ok, if you go and see Alan, he'll sort you out as the beginner boxers train in that part of the gym. Enjoy yourself!'

After momentarily basking in the glory of possibly being mistaken for a seasoned fighter I strode manfully over to the correct area. Money was quickly exchanged, a fiver, and I was straight into the warm up with Vinnie, the coach.

Light jogging became slightly faster jogging, which then became a worrying amount of intervals using ladders and sprints. Foolishly thinking the drinks break was about to precede a gentle cool down, I was alarmed to be lead outside for incline sprints up the pebbled beach.

In the rapid fire body weight circuit that followed I calculated I did more press ups in this one session than the combined sum of my leisurely lunchtime workouts. Working out in a group and having a trainer pushing you is a greater motivator than any iPhone app it seems.

And then down to the art of boxing: I was careful to present the image of a man who was just getting started but Vinnie and I both knew I couldn't punch my way out of a paper bag after the gruelling start. He patiently took me through the rudiments of footwork, defence and how to punch someone on the nose - the essentials.

Privately, I was a little intimidated when I first arrived at Brighton and Hove ABC but I needn't have been. It's an incredibly welcoming place with a thriving community feel which is a credit to the coaches and people that attend. There is a whole variety of juniors, professional fighters, amateur fighters and beginners like myself who are interested in keeping fit through learning a new sport.

The pencilled in 'Boxing' on my calendar has now been overwritten in permanent ink.