

# BULLIES *need* not APPLY

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A small-framed 14-year-old female boxer who fought off a baby-snatcher inspired two CU female students to learn all they can from their boxing lessons.

Madeline was walking an 18-month-old child along the Pearl Street Mall when a seedy looking man with scruffy hair and ragged clothes reached toward the child's stroller. Madeline's first instinct led her to throw a left hook to the man's face.

The man was knocked out and the baby was unharmed.

Madeline, the child and the child's mother had the Front Range Boxing Academy at 3146 28th Street to thank. CU students have Madeline to thank for their own inspiration.

But the art of boxing is not just a composite of fitness and self-defense. It involves self-revelations that both male and female CU students say they have experienced this semester while taking boxing lessons at the Front Range

*Students use boxing academy for more reasons than one; some train for the Olympics, others step into the ring to acquire emotional fundamentals*

Boxing Academy. Students box with varying intentions from getting a workout to training for the Olympics through weekly lessons, intensive bag-punching and acquisition of emotional fundamentals.

The academy does not encourage bullying, but when it comes to self-defense and courage, there is much to be learned.

"The skills taught at Front Range Boxing Academy are taught for fitness, sport, and self-defense only. We do not teach bullies how to be more effective bullies," says one of the forms that academy students must initial before being allowed into the boxing ring.

This "bully clause," which is part of the academy's liability waiver, is the fundamental doctrine adopted by several CU students in the last year.

"In boxing, you learn focus and self discipline," said Dave Gaudette, president and owner of Front Range Boxing Academy, which opened in 1994. Gaudette coaches both male

and female students from CU.

"A boxer has three emotions to control: fear, pain and anger," Gaudette said. "When students learn to control all three emotions, they can really excel."

Gaudette, who has a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Stonehill College in North Eason, Mass., and a masters degree from CU in comparative philosophy, encourages his students to embrace their own philosophy about boxing. Freshman international affairs major Drew Lane is training under Gaudette's tutelage and hopes to compete in the 2000 Olympic Games.

"You have to have a certain mentality," Lane said. "It takes a different kind of person to get into the ring and fight, but I figure whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

Lane's words reiterated the message of a cracked wooden sign hanging on one of the Academy's walls just outside the boxing ring. Other signs read: When In Doubt — Work Out, Please Respect The Gym And Each Other and Lead With Speed, Follow With Power.

Lane was introduced to Gaudette in November by James Cook, a U.S. amateur boxer who won his Colorado B class championship in December. At 5 feet 10 inches tall and 175 pounds, Lane said his small physique suits boxing.

"I was trying to take up a sport I could fit in with," Lane said. "I liked basketball, but I was too short to play."

Lane was born in the United States but spent the majority of his life in Hong Kong with his parents. He said he wasn't taken seriously as a boxer until he won his first U.S. Amateur Boxing fight Feb. 15.

"I was really nervous before my first fight," Lane said. "There were so many emotions."

Lane said his pupils were so dilated from nervousness that it looked like he was on drugs.

"The fight was the toughest nine to 12 minutes of my life," he said.

Lane said his persistence during the fight paid off. And Gaudette is giving him more practice time now.

"He's real tough," said Gaudette, who was the New Hampshire Amateur Lightweight Champion in 1969 and the South New England AAU Junior Welterweight Champion in 1971. As a Junior Welterweight, Gaudette weighed 139 pounds.

"This guy was knocking him on the chin, and he still wasn't going down," Gaudette said.

Gaudette said Lane has a good chance of qualifying for the Olympics but after just one fight, it's too early to be seeing medals. However, Gaudette is sure that Lane has the talent and persistence necessary to attain his goals.

"Drew trains really hard," Gaudette said.

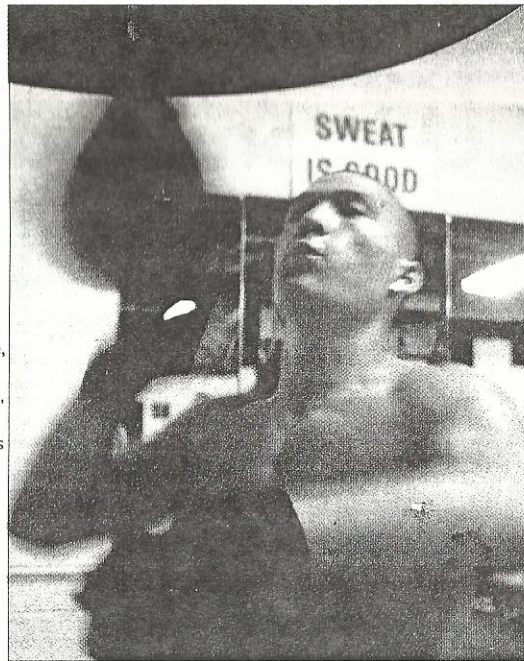
In addition, Lane is self-disciplined. Every morning, he runs four miles and does circuit training and shadow-boxing.

He said he also trains at the academy two hours every night and thoroughly enjoys the workout.

"Boxing is a real unique sport," Lane said.

## BOXING BUFFS:

The Front Range Boxing Academy teaches students, such as freshman Olympic hopeful Drew Lane, to defend themselves, but discourages them from becoming punch-pounding bullies.



Gabor Vajda / Campus Press

"A lot of people don't understand the effort put into it. People think that it's just guys going in (to the ring) to beat each other's heads off. It really requires skill."

Junior fine arts and creative writing double major Sarah Pace compared her academy boxing experience to creative dance.

"It's like ballet," Pace said. "You have to be graceful and coordinated." Pace started boxing at the academy in the middle of January with sophomore ethnic studies major Anne O'Brien. Both Pace and O'Brien said the main reason they box is for a good workout.

"It's better than the rec center," O'Brien said. "It's also totally fun for me. I don't ever want to do a match or anything, but it's a good stress release."

O'Brien said she was surprised by how much her first lesson wore her down.

She said her weekly lessons are a good way to get in shape and that she also benefits from rope-skipping and two-minute rounds at punching bags. Pace said boxing is an efficient way to release stress.

"You can do any sort of venting," Pace said. "You can do it to the bag, and it doesn't come back at you."

Gaudette agreed. "I come in with problems, but when I am done boxing, I'm on top of the problem. And the bags won't sue you either."

Pace, who according to Gaudette has a strong left hook, said she used to shadow-box with her dad when she was a kid but now gets strange reactions from people because she boxes.

"Some girls think it's cool but guys always have something stupid to say," Pace said.

O'Brien said that although she gets strange reactions from men, most people are interested and impressed.

"My mom's a huge feminist so she thinks it's

pretty cool," O'Brien said.

Gaudette encourages women to take lessons and said that about 25 percent of his clients are female.

"In some cases, women pick it up faster," Gaudette said. "I think it has to do with center of gravity."

Gaudette said the more balanced a boxer is, the easier it is to throw combinations.

Sophomore open option major Erik Gabrielson said that he admires O'Brien and Pace for boxing. Gabrielson took lessons at the academy most of last year and returned in January after a trip to New Zealand.

"I became interested in boxing pretty much from just watching people on TV," Gabrielson said. "I was really curious, so I thought I'd give it a try."

He said he especially likes sparring and would one day like to compete on an amateur level similar to Lane.

"I have really focused on what Dave teaches me — like jabs, keeping my hands up and other fundamental things," he said.

Front Range Boxing Academy charges students \$160 a month for one-hour lessons every week and unlimited gym access.

The Academy is designed to teach students boxing technique, heavy bag punching, speed bag punching, double-end bag punching, shadow-boxing and rope-skipping.

The Academy's goal is to change the image of boxing from a bully sport to one that involves critical thinking.

"The image of the boxer is dumb," Gaudette said. "But you've got to be able to figure stuff out. You've got to be able to think in milliseconds."

Gaudette stressed that fighters tend to be nice men and women and that fighting usually is not the key motive of participants.

"It's a sport for anybody interested," Gaudette said. "But it's not exactly chess, so we can't guarantee that there won't be any injuries."