

Kids and sports

Wondering when to let your child participate in organized sports and how much emphasis to place on the games? The American Running and Fitness Association is offering a free brochure on kids' fitness. Send a business-size, self-addressed, stamped (55 cents) envelope to the association, 4405 East West Highway, Suite 405, Bethesda, Md. 20814.

Heel pain

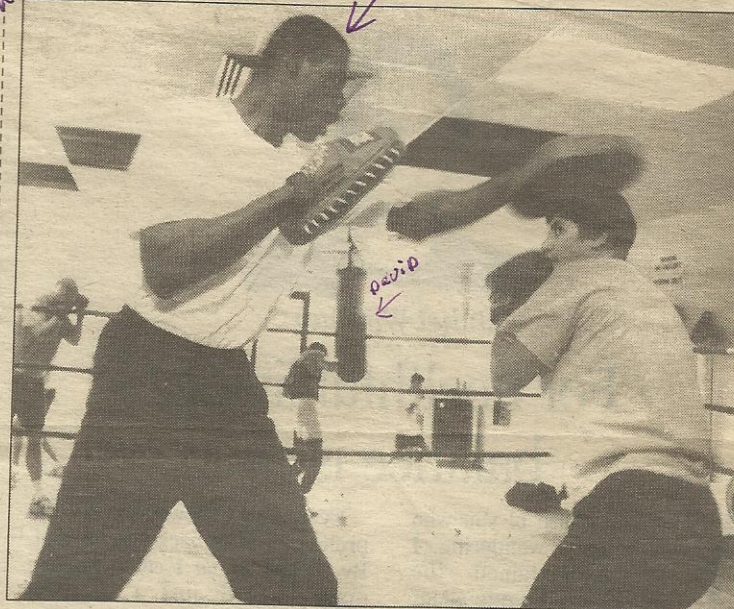
If the heels hurt or your Achilles tendons are tight, try out some calf stretches, especially before you exercise. Stand 2 to 3 feet from the wall, place one foot near the wall. Lean forward and keep your rear knee straight, but not locked, with the heel on the floor. Hold the stretch for 10 to 30 seconds, then switch legs.

Poor health

It isn't a lack of knowledge that keeps poor people from exercising as much as wealthier ones. It's a lack of means, says a survey done for former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop's group, Shape Up America. The poll found that poor people face major obstacles to exercise. They often don't feel safe in exercising outdoors in their neighborhoods, don't have public facilities to go to even if safety were not an issue, and can't afford private facilities.

Smog alert

Breathe through your nose, not your mouth, if you're exercising outdoors when there's smog, recommends the University of California at Berkeley Wellness Letter. That way, the amount of pollutants reaching your lungs will be reduced. You can lessen your exposure if you exercise early in the morning, when there's less car exhaust.



DENNIS WHEELER / For the Camera

Mouji Barash, right, dodges a jab from her trainer, Charles "Mac" McPherson of Front Range Boxing Academy.

Boxing can be a workout, even without a foe

By **JULIE STAFFORD**
FIT Staff Writer

Boxing has never been a sport I've really wanted to try.

Oh sure, when I was growing up, I wish I could have thrown a strategic punch or two back at my older brothers when I was the subject of their teasing.

But I have never had the urge to fight to the finish — or until the other guy is sprawled on the floor.

But you don't have to take on an opponent to don boxing gloves and get in shape.

If you're looking for a challenge — a way to spice up your workout routine — try boxing.

There's more to the sport than you might think. It's not simply a matter of having a powerful punch. Boxing is a sport that requires top physical shape.

Never would I have imagined the coordination required for a left jab or a right cross. But during a recent session at Front Range Boxing with its president, Dave Gaudette, I discovered coordination comes with practice.

First, there's the feet — how you stand and move around the ring or the bag, how your legs move in relation to what your arms are

doing. Remember how awkward you felt during your first aerobics class?

Once you catch on, boxing is almost like a dance. You have to be light on your feet.

And, even if you're just beginning, it provides a great workout — a total body workout.

Boxing is about more than toning the muscles in your arms.

It's about having strong legs, toned abs and being in great cardiovascular shape. I discovered that I still can jump rope — a great calorie burner.

There is a rush, too, that goes along with standing in the ring, which has a special floor designed to absorb shock. Gaudette spent time teaching

me how to shadow box. Using special gloves, he blocked my punches, all the while moving his feet.

Front Range Boxing isn't a fancy gym, but you know the minute you walk in that you're there to sweat. And if you have trouble finding your rhythm, they have plenty of music to help.

I'm in fairly good shape, but after an hour with Gaudette, I knew I would be sore. And I wasn't disappointed.

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