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Up close and personal with

# Padbox

Padbox is a unique, primarily one to one boxing based workout. It's the brain child of former amateur boxer Ian Burbidge and sports scientist Andrew Scott. Unlike other similar workouts you're put in the ring with your trainer. You get up close and personal as you hook, jab, cross and throw body punches – to pads of course

**My experience was** made all the more realistic by the fact that I learned about Padbox in a real east end of London boxing club, The Peacock gym. And if that was not enough to make me feel like a 'fighter' Ian strapped up my hands before I put on my gloves, to protect my hands

hook combination. I soon began to memorise the combinations and the intensity of the workout increased. Ian must have recognised my 'ring craft' – well that's what I like to think, as we were soon doing rounds, replete with bell. All the six or so combinations that I had been

During a break Ian explained that the most effective boxing is done at close range, when you can see the whites of your opponent's eyes and literally feel their breath on your face. This added that extra realism to the workout. I was ducking, coming up, throwing an upper cut, moving backward



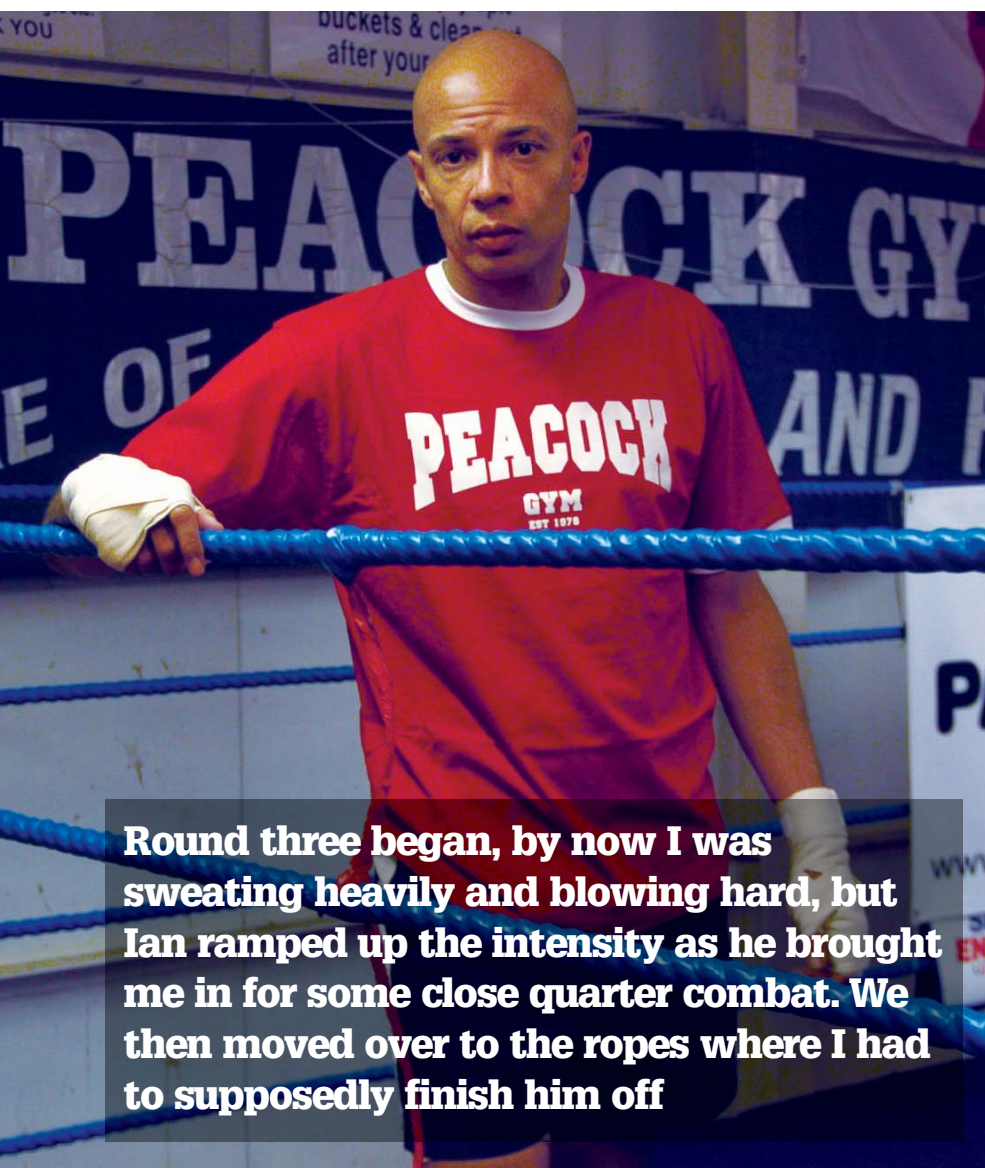
before the workout. I then climbed through the ropes and into the ring. Ian began by taking me through the individual punches and punch combinations, showing me how to do these technically correctly. Then it was on to some serious padwork. We began with the more easy to remember combinations, jab, cross and uppercut. The movements initiated by Ian's pad placement. If he moved one in an arc over my head, this would be the cue to duck, come back up and throw an upper cut, left hook and right cross. If they were held up at shoulder level facing me, then I had to follow up with a left, right, left, right

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taught came into play as he moved me around the ring.

"Get in closer, step in, come on," encouraged Ian. This will be a foreign instruction to anyone who has not boxed.

and forwards jabbing and even throwing body punches to Ian's pad, placed at hip level. At times just a couple of feet from him. Getting up close takes getting used to and you're instincts tell you to move away from



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what would be the danger zone. But this does not make for realistic 'fighting'. The bell sounded and we took a time out.

Ian explained that close quarter punches were more effective than long range ones. This seemed to go against common sense when longer swings would seem to carry more power. Ian called a time out to show me how this was not the case. He got me to right and left hook from range and then standing toe to toe. The former punches, or should I say hay-makers, tailed off with a dull thud when my gloves impacted with the pads, but the close range 'missiles' landed with a loud thwack. He was right. At that moment I realised what it must be like to be on the receiving end of a close range missile.

The bell sounded and it was time to go again. I was trying to punch effectively. If I didn't Ian would point out the flaws in my technique. On a couple of occasions I experienced pain in my thumb and/or wrist as I landed a right hander. This was due to my poor technical execution of punches from this side and in particular

my lack of correct wrist to forearm alignment. Ian explained that you should not turn your wrist in, out, up or under when you punch otherwise the force created does not follow a straight (and non painful) path through your arm. Instead it deviates which as I found out can be quite painful. I'd recommend that you make sure you learn to punch properly before you resist the very tempting proposition of seeing how hard you can punch. Ian (or your Padbox instructor) will of course ensure that you are able to punch properly before allowing you to 'go for it'.

Round three began, by now I was sweating heavily and blowing hard, but Ian ramped up the intensity as he brought me in for some close quarter combat. We then moved over to the ropes where I had to supposedly finish him off. The fact that he had the pads and was not feeling a thing made it a little difficult! Twenty seconds to go and we were still there. Ian put the pads up at shoulder height and I knew I had to throw a left, right, left, right combination



and then another, another and another. Ian or rather Padbox had Ko'd me.

Padbox is a fun - as close as you can get to actual boxing without getting hit workout -that will test the boxer (or fitness level) in anyone. **UF**



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Instructor training courses are run regularly (go to the website for details). Courses are Register of Exercise Professionals (REPS) approved

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