

Wayne Bourque

The master of the ring proudly shows us his arena.
By Derick Chetty

“BOXING IS ADDICTIVE,” says Wayne Bourque. “It gets those endorphins flying.”

For Bourque, 56, boxing has practically been a lifelong passion.

Born to Métis parents in Fort McMurray, Alta., he learned to box at age 13. Success at various national championships would have led him to the 1984 Olympics if it wasn't for a skiing accident a few months before the trials that put an end to dreams of winning a medal for his country.

Today, Bourque operates Centre Ring, a popular boxercise gym in Toronto that not only attracts elite hockey players looking to add some edge to their fitness routines but also regular citizens. There are 14-year-olds looking to gain some confidence right up to

72-year-olds strength training.

Boxing as a fitness activity can help hone your hand-to-eye co-ordination and improve your strength and endurance levels. And with one of Bourque's one-hour classes, which includes lifting weights, punching the bag, peddling on the spin-cycle and skipping rope – all to energetic music – you can burn up to 900 calories.

Bourque is at the same weight he was 20 years ago and still in fighting shape. A few years ago, he won the Ringside world masters in his age group in the lightweight category.

But with his competing days behind him, the charismatic champion, when not putting clients through their paces, has been called upon to do some film work. He is planning to grow the gym business with his son. ☐

- **Favourite brand of sneakers?** I have three: Nike, Under Armour and Asics.
- **Your favourite guilty snack?** Vanilla ice cream.
- **Best way to motivate yourself?** I use other people to motivate me in the gym and in the business. I also use my father and my family as I always want to do well for them.
- **Favourite place to exercise outdoors?** My gym! I just open the garage door, and we run the stairs.
- **Best piece of advice you were ever given regarding fitness?** Repetition and focus are key.
- **Favourite resource for nutritional tips?** My wife, Carol, is one. [She works in health and wellness.] I take in information from a wide variety of sources. Everyone has a different body type and blood type.
- **Favourite boxing movie?** *Rocky* and, of course, *Cinderella Man* (because I was in it!).
- **Favourite song to skip or jog to?** “Hungry like the Wolf” by Duran Duran.
- **Words to live by?** I never want to say, I coulda, woulda, shoulda ... Respect is key and at the end of the day you always want to be able to look yourself in the mirror.