

GOING THE DISTANCE TO MAKE PERSONAL TRAINING BETTER

BRYAN MYERS
bmyers@metroland.com

Beach season may be coming to a close, but beach body season doesn't have to end.

A new gym in Acton is offering carefully tailored personal training sessions and small classes geared toward finding the right fit for athletes of all skill levels.

Robert Smith opened Going the Distance Fitness in June, expanding his personal training business to a dedicated space.

"I was already operating out of my garage," Smith said.

As a young man, Smith - an avid athlete involved in martial arts, boxing and kick-boxing - cracked his L2 vertebra and as a result, said he started learning more about anatomy and ways to control his own injury.

"I was initially teaching boxing skills," Smith said. "but that turned into dealing with people's injuries,

particularly post-rehab."

But Smith said he felt frustrated with the way big-box gyms operated.

Smith's training partner, Tyler John, met at Bryan College in Toronto.

"Our emphasis is on private sessions," Smith said, adding that the trainers also run a number of classes to prepare people for personal training.

"We want to get a sense of where everyone is and put them in a program specifically for their needs," Smith said.

While training packages can be purchased on a per-week basis, clients can take advantage of the space several times during the week. The space, when not in use, can be booked by up to two clients at a time for their own personal workouts, always with a trainer on-site.

"We book only two people at any one time, then you don't have to wait for machinery and you don't have a lot of people staring at you," Smith said.



Bryan Myers/Torstar

Robert Smith, owner of Going the Distance Fitness in Acton, is offering a Chi-Kung session among horses on July 20 at Corner Stone Equestrian Centre in Erin.

Though all levels of fitness are welcome, Going the Distance trains athletes for various sport-specific workouts.

"We want to move away from machine training," Smith said. "The only class of athlete that should be

moving to machine training is bodybuilders. Those dudes look really nice, but their performance capacities tend to be reduced."

Smith said his goal as a trainer is to make himself obsolete.

"I want you to learn to

fish for yourself," Smith said. "The idea that everyone needs a personal trainer for life, I don't agree with that."

Training packages start at \$60 per hour for one session a week, with better rates for more sessions.

"Personal training is an expensive process, there's no way around that," Smith said, "but I'd like to try to make it as accessible as possible."

Going the Distance Fitness is located at 56 Mill St. E. in Acton.

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