

Boxing: family fun? Why not says Crossfit owner

By Herb Garbutt
METROLAND WEST MEDIA GROUP

When it comes to sports that are fun for the whole family, boxing likely doesn't spring to mind.

Andrea Savard doesn't believe that has to be the case.

Savard began boxing eight years ago and was immediately taken by the sport. After moving to Cambridge, she discovered there were no boxing gyms where she could train. She had been working as a personal trainer and when she and her husband George, a former pro football player, began investigating opportunities for a new business, they decided to open their own gym.

The result is CrossFit (509 Main St.), a gym that utilizes boxing techniques and training methods to help improve its clients' fitness.

"Most people, you say boxing gym and they think dingy, grungy and old," said Savard. "We wanted a place where our kids could grow up and our family could have some together time."

After starting the business in Cambridge, they recognized the potential in a growing community such as Milton and recently moved their business east.

Savard said it was the combination of the

mental and physical challenges that attracted her to boxing — not only having the strength required but also the understanding of strategy and mechanics of boxing, such as when to counter. She soon recognized other benefits, the most obvious was in her fitness level and in her own body, particularly in losing weight after having twins.

"The results you see from the hard work you put in are mind blowing," she said. "It's life altering when you see your physique changing."

Savard has utilized all of her skills to become a provincial champion and last year won a bronze medal at nationals. And while she loves training, she also likes to see the confidence, self-esteem and improved performance being brought out in those she trains.

While boxing techniques are the method she uses, Savard has trained golfers and



GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION

PUNCH POWER: Andrea Savard, left, trainer and owner of CrossFit Gym, puts Jennifer Morris through a workout that uses and teaches boxing skills, techniques and strategies.

hockey, soccer and lacrosse teams. The boxing skills help improve their core strength, balance and agility. Perhaps the most rewarding clients, Savard said, are not necessarily athletes but people simply looking to improve their health.

"We've had some members come in who are significantly overweight, have high blood pressure, and in three months, the health results are dramatically different."

While teaching boxing techniques, Savard

is quick to point out that the training is all non-contact (unless requested otherwise, and she feels the person is ready to progress). Still, those in her class will learn all the skills any other boxer would use in the ring.

"It's not your typical boxercise class, it's actual boxing, and the greatest part is it's being taught by a real boxer," she said. "Until you've had a competitive fight, you don't understand how combinations work, what to do when an opponent punches, how to slip and duck. There's a real science behind it."

It is that science, the part "that keeps your brain active, too" that Savard enjoys the most. Without it, she said she would have a difficult time keeping up her own desire to train.

"I'm just not motivated to do a typical workout," Savard said. "Rather than going in and riding a bike, you're learning a new skill and challenging yourself, but you're working your tail off."

Having the opportunity to work out in a setting where the whole family can be comfortable is another reason Savard believes their gym is unique.

"Why it has been successful is, unlike hockey where parents go watch the kids play, this is a chance for parents to connect with their teenagers, just being in the same class and working side by side. We really want to encourage families to have fun and get fit together."

Mark's Work Wearhouse

LOOK...for your

Mark's Work Wearhouse Flyer

in Today's Canadian Champion!

Milton Crossroads
1220 Steeles Ave E. • 905-878-6163

- 3 Brake Service
- 3 Steering & Suspension
- 3 MOT Safety Inspection
- 3 Computer Diagnostics

- 3 Tires
- 3 Air Conditioning Service
- 3 Auto Electric and Charging System
- 3 General Repairs

TUNE-UP

FOR SPRING *With Us!*

DON'T BE LEFT OUT IN THE RAIN!

For the Air We Breathe

K&B AUTO SERVICE

715 Main Street E. Milton 876-3148

KEVIN BLACKLOCK

JOIN THE MOVEMENT. END MS.

Milton - Halton Hills MS Walk
Sunday April 19, 2009

MS WALK
EVERY STEP MATTERS.

Register at mwalks.ca or 1-888-822-8467

Water quality.

It's a growing concern.

Ducks Unlimited's wetlands remove harmful nitrates and phosphates from polluted waters.

Canada's Conservation Company

1(800)665-DUCK
www.ducks.ca

DON'T MISS THE CONSUMER TRAVEL MARKETING OPPORTUNITY OF THE YEAR!

Toronto's

ULTIMATE TRAVEL SHOW

PRESENTED BY TORONTO STAR

METRO TORONTO CONVENTION CENTRE

Put your business face to face with THOUSANDS OF TRAVEL CONSUMERS. Limited Exhibit space still available.

Call Show Manager Katherine TODAY!
905-842-6591 1-800-693-7986
www.tottravelshow.com