

Grind Boxing Gym Newsletter – November-December 2018

Dear Grind Boxing Gym Members and Friends,

As 2018 comes to an end, we can look back on an excellent year for [Grind Boxing Gym](#). Many new members joined us to improve their fitness, training right alongside our competitive boxers. All of our members, new and longstanding, have tapped into my real boxing training program to improve their fitness, conditioning, strength, and balance. In this newsletter I highlight the great results from our competitive team and invite all of you to join me at our Christmas party on December 14th.

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Highlights from a Great Year of Competition

I am proud of our [Grind Boxing Gym](#) competitive team for competing well in three high-level events in 2018. The training required to compete in Olympic-style boxing along with finding the time and resources to travel make competition difficult at best. Our boxers showed their commitment and did what it took to step into the competitive ring. At each event, we made quite an impression, bringing home belts and trophies for excellent boxing. Here are the highlights:

[SoCal State Boxing Championships](#) – In late June, our team traveled to Menifee, California to compete in this three-day, all-ages amateur tournament. Rodney Cooper and Carlos Montes competed in the senior division and Sue Knaup competed in the masters division. Rodney won his quarter-final bout then lost a close match to the same opponent who had won the decision from Carlos in the quarter-finals. Sue brought home another championship belt after a technically difficult bout that taught her the necessity of adjusting to a different type of opponent.



[Dreamland Masters Boxing World Championships](#) – In late September, Bill Monastero and Sue Knaup represented our masters team in this two-day tournament in San Jose, California, cheered on by the Grind support team. Both won championship belts, boxing great throughout their bouts and winning by unanimous decisions. Both kept their focus and controlled the situation in the ring through all the rounds. I am very proud of them!

Gene Lewis Invitational Boxing Tournament – In early November, the Sepulveda brothers, Miguel and Luis, competed for our team at this three-day tournament in Mesa, Arizona, the largest boxing tournament in the West. Both won their semi-final matches in style, then lost close decisions to more experienced boxers in their finals. This was Luis' first competition. They both fought great matches and brought home well-deserved runner-up trophies.



As we look ahead to 2019, I'm already putting together our calendar of competition events. If you are expecting to compete next year, please let me know and we'll get started on your training plan. If you are happy to box at Grind Gym for fitness, consider joining us at these events anyway to cheer on our team.



Come celebrate our competitors at our Christmas party on Friday December 14 (see next article).

Grind Christmas Party Friday December 14

Come join us at the gym for our Christmas party Friday December 14 starting at 6:00pm. We'll have snacks and drinks to enjoy as we look back on our impressive year of boxing together. Come early to work out, then stow your gloves and join in the fun. This photo is from last year's party – lots of fun!



Grindings – Mental Preparation for Competition

Mental and psychological preparation is important in any competitive sport, but it is crucial in combat sports, especially boxing and kickboxing. To compete well while trading full contact punches or kicks with another human requires intense focus and confidence that can only come from proper training.

In this article I will emphasize a very important aspect of mental preparation – defensive skills training. As a coach, I start every future competitive boxer on learning solid and reliable defensive skills so that once they reach the competitive ring, they will know they can defend themselves. The mental preparation and confidence that comes from believing in one's defensive skills is often the deciding factor between winning and losing.

Over my forty plus years as a boxer and a coach of boxers, I have encountered many people who only want to learn how to punch, not caring about defensive measures. Over these years, I've trained many people from other gyms who were allowed to spar or even compete without

sufficient defensive skills. The beatings they'd suffered had crushed their confidence and though I tried to boost them by showing them this vital missing skill of defense, their confidence was so damaged, they left boxing forever.

I realize that the endless repetitions required to learn proper defense lead to a difficult and long process that might seem tedious and not as fun as punching. But boxers who commit to learning defensive skills lock them into their muscle memory to be tapped in competition as sudden, reactive movements that flash without thought. These blocks as well as upper body and foot movements often prevent an opponent from landing punches or at least lessen their blows.

Every fighter is afraid before each fight. This is normal and important. Without fear, a boxer doesn't understand the risk of the situation. As a coach, I help my boxers control their fear and channel it into their performance through my defensive training drills. I start them off gently until I can see their blocks and movements coming without thought. Then I can step up the intensity of these drills to channel their fear into swift defenses. When they realize their skill in defending against a barrage of punches, I know they have transformed their fear and are ready to compete.

Experience is another factor that improves a boxer's confidence and mental preparation for the next bout. In the Olympic-style boxing that the Grind team competes in, boxers are matched with opponents of similar experience. With each bout, the excitement, noise, and bravado of the competitive arena lessens and the boxer can focus all the better on the task at hand.

At [Grind Boxing Gym](#), I ensure that mental preparation is primary for all of my competitive boxers. Each boxer who wants to compete must prove to me that they have excellent defensive skills before I will be in their corner. So if you are considering competing, be ready for lots of repetitive defensive drills until your skills are so sharp, not even a speeding fly can hit you in the face. Then we can talk about competition.

Coach Jarek Slagowski