

# Self-esteem soars

LAILA Ali was renowned as a trailblazer when she followed her famous father into the world of professional boxing.

Now women across Brisbane's southside are embracing the Queensbury rules – and members of the women-only Butterfly Boxing program are discovering the sport is much more than beating your opponent to a pulp in the ring.

The unique training regime established by Huia Hikaiti and partner Gareth Williams at Griffith University's Nathan campus focuses less on aggressive combat and more on personal confidence.

"We promote healthy attitudes, confidence, and well-being for women through skill development," Ms Hikaiti said. "We've had some amazing results.

"Confidence doesn't come from learning to throw a punch, but through learning how to defend yourself. That's the biggest difference in our training."

The personal development of Butterfly Boxing's students is closely monitored through three levels of training.



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■ Hard-hitting . . . Huia Hikaiti and Fenella Schmidt at Butterfly Boxing, Nathan.

"We have quite serious performance tracking and performance enhancing strategies, as opposed to just getting into the gym and punching the bag," Ms Hikaiti said. "This gives us an edge.

"Some students have become successful fighters, and others have gone on to do in-house competitions.

"One lady was very shy and never thought she would actually spar, let alone compete. But just recently she did compete,



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■ Boxer Laila Ali.

and she did extremely well.

"Her confidence is now sky-high."