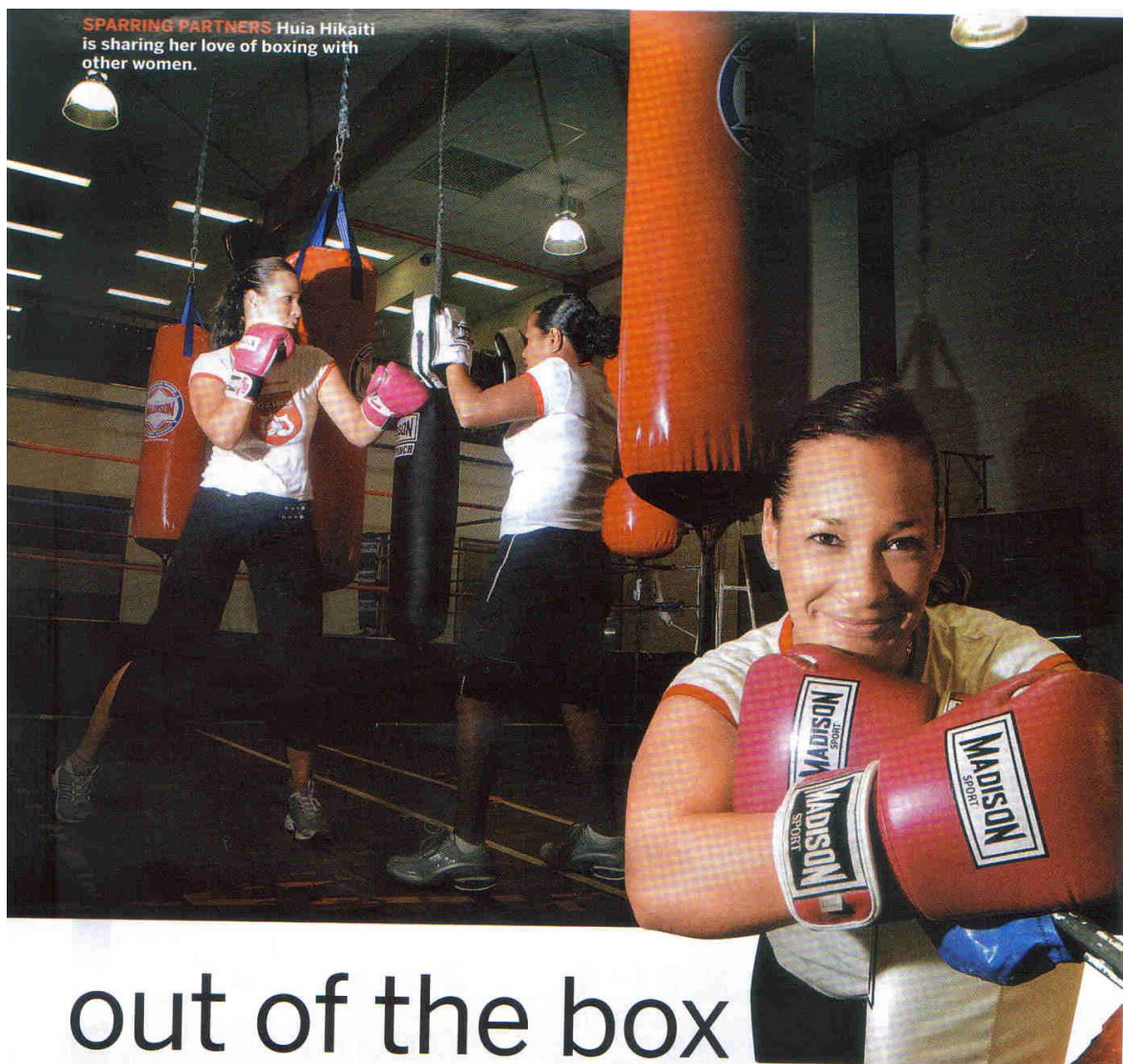


SPARRING PARTNERS Huia Hikaiti is sharing her love of boxing with other women.



out of the box

Thanks to a new centre at Nathan, women have a chance to learn how to box like the pros – pink gloves are optional.

BOXING probably isn't the first sport that springs to mind for women seeking a little fun and fitness.

Make it skill-based, keep classes small and all-female, and combine the training with free life coaching, however, and things start to look a little more appealing.

Since their move into Griffith University's 'Hub' gym space in February, owners Gareth Williams and Huia Hikaiti have positioned The Boxing Shop as the ideal local training space for men and women, but it's their Butterfly Boxing classes that has ladies all aflutter.

Gareth says Butterfly Boxing is a great way for women to meet, gain confidence and fitness, but it also focuses on teaching the right techniques rather than randomly whacking a boxing bag.

"Women's boxing is often about fitness but we certainly teach them properly how to throw a hook and a punch," he says.

Partner Huia says there are many benefits of the classes, including personal development.

"The Butterfly Boxing for us was about women learning boxing properly and I'm a life coach as well, so mixing that in too," she says.

"When we have workshops, it is really about personal

development and attitude. Our whole team takes the approach about helping people progress and we really take interest in that.

"We really do find women walk away more confident."

The first stage (level 1) of the Butterfly Boxing program is \$69 for six weeks, during which time women learn the basics including hand wrapping, stance, punches, movement, shadow boxing and boxer's circuits.

Level two steps up to two sessions per week for four weeks. Focusing on further skills development and including life coaching sessions, the aim is to refine the skills learnt at beginner level.

By level three, women undertake three sessions per week for a month, focusing on skills, fitness and personal development.

"At the end of level 3 they have a competition spar, which is completely voluntary," Huia says.

A champion of women's boxing as a sport, Huia says she loves developing women's skills and confidence, and dreams of women's boxing being recognised at Commonwealth and Olympic level.

Phone 1300 660 017 or visit www.theboxingshop.com.au ▀