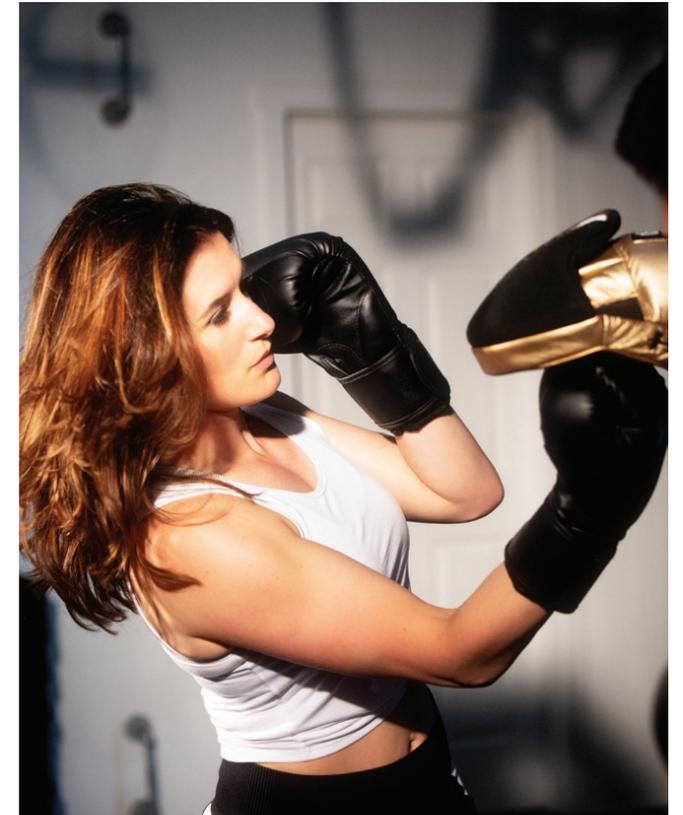


THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

Open for Fitness: Boxing Clinics are a Sell-Out at **Black Sheep Studios** on LBI

Written by Lisa Simek Photos by Michael John Murphy



"This move is a slip jab. You are avoiding or "slipping" a jab, while returning one yourself to the opponent's chest or stomach. It is one of many ways to use the jab stealthfully," adds Reyes.

If you're not having fun during your workout, you're not going to the right place. And for those looking for an all-inclusive, non-judgmental, encouraging environment—with a baaa'd ass workout (see what we did there?)—then Black Sheep Studios is the place for you.

"A lot of times, mainstream fitness culture takes itself way too seriously, and we represent the black sheep of that dynamic," shares founder and owner of the fitness studio, Devon Karvan. Having opened her first studio solo with four spin bikes in a small sublet space from Liquid Bliss Yoga in 2016, she would have never imagined that this year will be her fourth year in business, currently employing 16+ instructors, with countless classes each day, and leasing the entire building of the old Sink R Swim location at 11101 Long Beach Blvd in Haven Beach on LBI. In this charming and earthy setting, there is a constant vibe of acceptance and quirky irreverence, making the programming and interaction not only fun and engaging, but people it helps gym-goers almost forget that they're working out because they're having such a good time.





In this photo Hector is doing a "Jab." "The jab is your lead hand in the fighting stance. It is used for offensive and defensive attacks. It keeps opponents at distance and disrupts timing, and it is also a set up for future punches," shares Hector Reyes.



"The gym is founded on principles of inclusivity," adds Karvan. "We don't care what you look like, how old you are, what gender you are or if you are a metaphorical black sheep. Here you belong and you are going to get, the most intense (but all level) and motivational workout we can physically offer you," she continues. Holding dozens of classes per day, the studio has everything from barre, pilates and spin, to HIIT, boxing, TRX, even an outdoor, ocean front "beach bootcamp"—among dozens more.

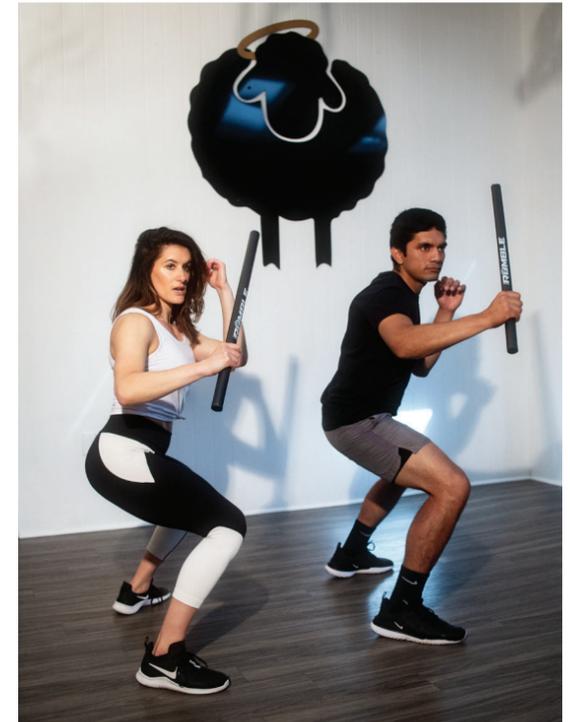
Brought up as a dancer her entire life, receiving formal dance training, Devon acknowledges that dance in any form—ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, lyrical—has always been an integral part of her fitness inspiration. By her teen years, she eventually branched over into the world of surfing, snowboarding and skateboarding. It's safe to assume that her multisport athleticism might have a little something to do with her deep passion [and talent] for health and fitness, of the body and mind.

One such workout we are delving into this season will be the uber-popular, sell-out boxing clinic offered by Black Sheep Studios. In the words of the class description, "If you ever feel like you just want to kick someone's ass, but you don't feel like going to jail? Well, this is the class for you!" "Fitness boxing is a great workout for those who are apprehensive of attending a traditional boxing gym because they don't want to do a contact sport-- this involves all of the same moves, but without the physical contact. Here, one focuses on memorizing combinations on the mitts while also working on footwork and cardio," describes Hector Reyes, who discovered Muay Thai kickboxing at the age of 17 and has been training ever since. The Black Sheep Boxing Clinic combines martial arts techniques with fast-paced cardio. The high-energy workout challenges the beginner and elite athlete alike to build stamina, improve coordination, flexibility, and burn calories as one simultaneously builds lean muscle during the challenging workout. Gym members are encouraged to punch their frustrations out, and instructors cheer you on as they prepare to take a hit.

Gabrielle Silverman explains, "The first photo is that of a low fighter stance using the Escrima stick. Opposite hand is in the "guard" position."



"The Front Kick is when the striking part of the foot is the ball of the foot, and you aim for the ankles, knees, or shins of your opponent," she adds.



"Rumble is a pre-choreographed MMA cardio class, heavily influenced / inspired by Tang Soo Do, that was created for every fitness lover (who loves to get their sweat on). Rumble puts your endurance to the test while increasing your balance, agility and core-stability. Best of all, everyone will use The RUMBLE Stick (modeled after an actual Escrima stick, used as a weapon) making RUMBLE unique to any other workout—no MMA experience required," shares certified instructor Gabrielle Silverman, who crossed over into the Rumble realm in 2015 after being a Baltimore Ravens cheerleader for four years.