

Up close and personal with

Padbox

Padbox is a unique, primarily one to one boxing based workout. It's the brain child of former amateur boxer Ian Burbidge and sports scientist Andrew Scott. Unlike other similar workouts you're put in the ring with your trainer. You get up close and personal as you hook, jab, cross and throw body punches – to pads of course

My experience was made all the more realistic by the fact that I learned about Padbox in a real east end of London boxing club, The Peacock gym. And if that was not enough to make me feel like a 'fighter' Ian strapped up my hands before I put on my gloves, to protect my hands

hook combination. I soon began to memorise the combinations and the intensity of the workout increased. Ian must have recognised my 'ring craft' – well that's what I like to think, as we were soon doing rounds, replete with bell. All the six or so combinations that I had been

During a break Ian explained that the most effective boxing is done at close range, when you can see the whites of your opponent's eyes and literally feel their breath on your face. This added that extra realism to the workout. I was ducking, coming up, throwing an upper cut, moving backward



before the workout. I then climbed through the ropes and into the ring. Ian began by taking me through the individual punches and punch combinations, showing me how to do these technically correctly. Then it was on to some serious padwork. We began with the more easy to remember combinations, jab, cross and uppercut. The movements initiated by Ian's pad placement. If he moved one in an arc over my head, this would be the cue to duck, come back up and throw an upper cut, left hook and right cross. If they were held up at shoulder level facing me, then I had to follow up with a left, right, left, right

The former punches – or should I say hay-makers, tailed off with a dull thud when my gloves impacted with the pads, but the close range 'missiles' landed with a loud thwack

taught came into play as he moved me around the ring.

"Get in closer, step in, come on," encouraged Ian. This will be a foreign instruction to anyone who has not boxed.

and forwards jabbing and even throwing body punches to Ian's pad, placed at hip level. At times just a couple of feet from him. Getting up close takes getting used to and you're instincts tell you to move away from