

John Brindle

John Brindle is a qualified boxing coach at Clayton Amateur Boxing Club, based in the Community Centre on Pick Up Street.

His love of boxing started at a young age, inspired by his ex-boxer father, who encouraged him and his brother to look after themselves. John trained and sparred for years but was unfortunately unable to compete due to being partially sighted. However, this set back didn't stop John from enjoying sports. He went on to play football for Padiham and Accrington Stanley, before falling back in love with boxing, and began coaching when his son took to the ring. He described his attitude towards coaching as a 'dog with a bone'.

The community-based boxing gym was a brainchild of Alison Whitfield and together with committee members, David Garrity, John Burke, and John, they set up 'Fit for Boxing'. This was held in the Youth Club on Moor Street, but due to it being a council building they were unable to Spar. This worked in their favour and they moved to an old garage and formed their club in 2011. With a lot of fundraising and networking, the club were able to grow and find help from Hyndburn Leisure, securing them a space in the Community centre.

Clayton Amateur Boxing Club is now a prime feature of Clayton Le Moors. It has become a fitness centre, which leads female only sessions, classes for people with learning disabilities, army veterans and the youth. It is a welcoming community for anyone who wants to improve their fitness and social activities.

John's vision for the club keeps expanding. His aim is to make a pathway for the young people of Clayton. Introducing them to the discipline of boxing, to training individuals with coaching and gym instructor courses, and with the option of employment within the club. At the time of this interview, two young people had already passed their coaching badges, with another one on their way.

I asked John, what had motivated him to do all this amazing work and he explained to me that he loved 'watching lives change around. Boxing changes lives.'

When John isn't coaching, he enjoys time with his wife, four children and ten grandkids. He loves camping and fishing and supporting his team, Burnley FC as a season ticket holder.

John has lived in Clayton all his life, his love for the community is evident in his work. He describes the community as 'They may be rough and ready, but they'll give you their last penny.' That's pure poetry, maybe John took a little more than boxing inspiration from Muhammad Ali.

I asked John, 'What's the best advice you could give.' He replied, "Stick to your guns and be consistent with the things that you do. Don't just give up because you've hit a bump in the road. Get over it and carry on. You don't lose, you learn." His final one he said with a laugh. "Records are for DJ's'

It was a pleasure talking to John, and from talking to others, I can see that he is a pillar of the community. The work he is doing with the community is amazing. He has a gung-ho attitude and is a true inspiration for others, motivating them to be the best version of themselves. I look forward to seeing where he takes the club next.