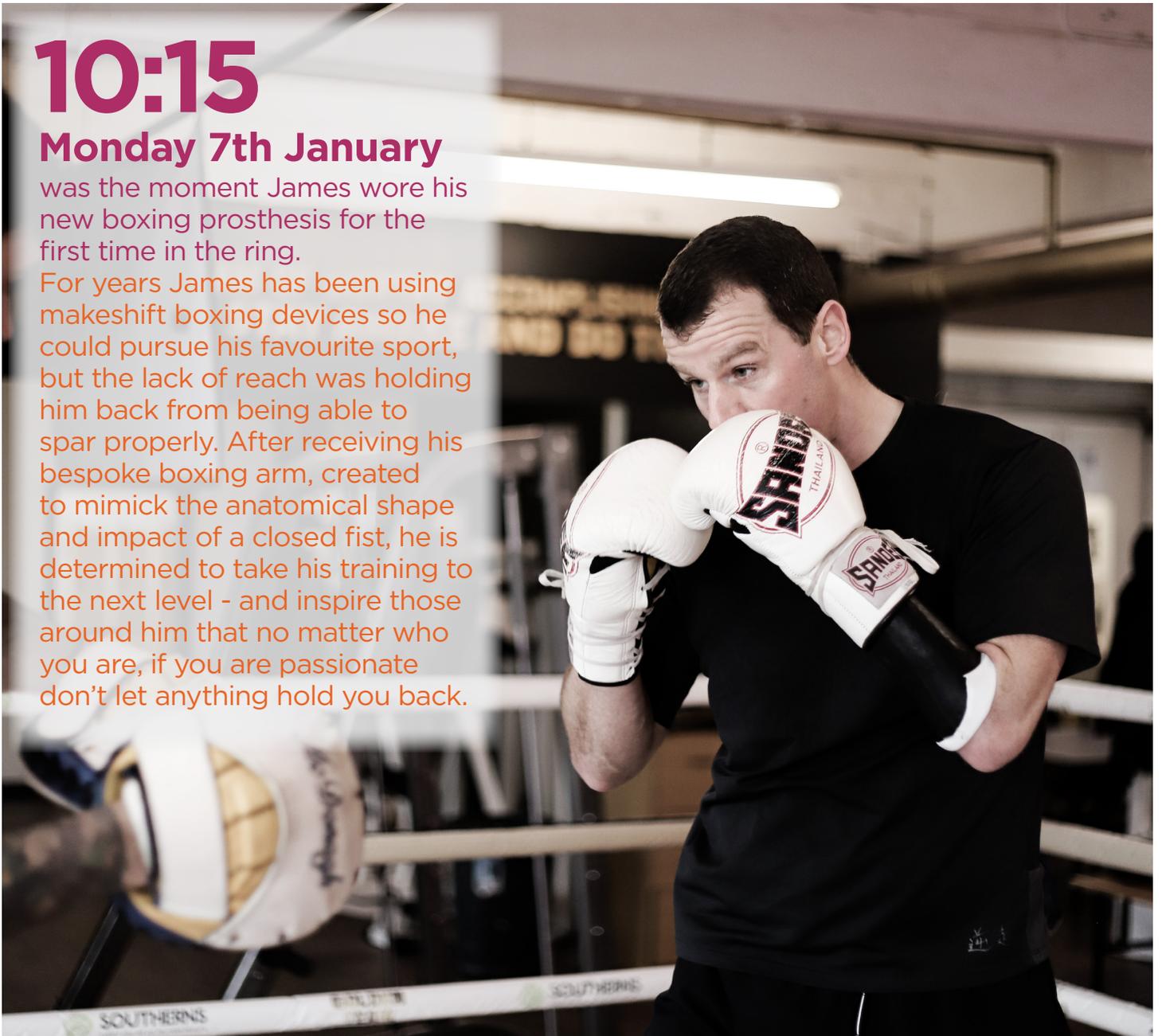


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Monday 7th January

was the moment James wore his new boxing prosthesis for the first time in the ring.

For years James has been using makeshift boxing devices so he could pursue his favourite sport, but the lack of reach was holding him back from being able to spar properly. After receiving his bespoke boxing arm, created to mimick the anatomical shape and impact of a closed fist, he is determined to take his training to the next level - and inspire those around him that no matter who you are, if you are passionate don't let anything hold you back.



“I had a bit of a negative mentality as a kid, thinking I wouldn't be able to do this or do that. Whereas I wish I had the ability to tell my younger self ‘you know what, just give it a go - what have you got to lose?’”

Case Study

James



The story

James is a congenital amputee from Leeds, who'd grown up surrounded by sport. As a child he loved boxing and rugby and was keen to try it competitively, but found there were limited options for someone with a limb impairment. At the time, there were little to no upper limb devices for him to try out, so by the age of thirteen he had given up with using a prosthesis completely, *"personally, I found I got on better without them."* Determined to still continue with boxing, he settled for training on the pads and bags with a boxing glove tied onto the end of his residual limb, but struggled when it came to sparring as he didn't have the reach he needed. But the love for the sport kept him going, *"I just enjoy all aspects of the sport, the art, defense, and technical skill of boxing."*

The solution

It wasn't until years later, when James struck up conversation with a patient at his local prosthetic centre who had had a custom canoe arm created for them, that he became intrigued by the idea that a device could be made to aid his boxing training. He asked his prosthetist Asad if there was scope for a prosthesis which could provide some extra reach, who was positive they would be able to help. Asad had him bring in his current boxing device - a boxing glove stuffed with socks - and discussed what he was looking for.

Roger, a prosthetic technician at Seacroft, then set to work to create a boxing arm which would not only be safe, but also functional so as not to compromise James' ability to spar against others.

Firstly, he created a carbon laminated socket to fix the hand on to, and then took measurements of James' sound side and his boxing gloves. From this they created a foam hand which would fit snugly within the glove, before fixing it onto the socket and reinforcing it with a durable binding material. The foam hand was then covered with another layer of soft foam, before a final covering of leather was added for cosmetic effect.

The main challenges they encountered were not only creating an arm which mirrored the weight and length of his sound limb so he could use it effectively, but for it to also be safe when against other opponents. The finished result was a boxing arm which mimicked the anatomical shape of a closed fist and would have the same impact as a human hand, but would remain durable during rounds of sparring.

The turning point

Since his final fitting James has been wearing the boxing arm every day for training, and is thrilled that he can now perfect his punch technique against able-bodied opponents. This has been a huge readjustment for James, as having a more varied range and extra reach has taken his training to the next level; *"I've spent a lifetime with only one hand, and now I've got an extra six inches on my back hand!"* He is now excited at the possibility of what his passion for boxing may lead to - *"I'd love to have at least one fight in my life where I can get into the ring and compete."*

For James it has not only been a physical but also a mental journey, as he had previously been hesitant to get involved in the sports he enjoyed due to the lack of opportunities when he was a child. But, through continuously pushing himself, advances in upper limb prosthetics and driven by his love for boxing, he now has a prosthesis which inspires him to take on new challenges: *"I wish I had the mentality I have now when I was a kid - I don't let anything hold me back now."*

Being empowered by his bespoke device has spurred James on to encourage amputees of all ages to do the same and remember it's never too late; *"you never know until you try. Whatever your situation is, it is what it is and you can't change it - but if it's something you enjoy there's no reason why you can't get out there and do it. That's all any of us can do really, be the best **you** that you can be."*

To find out more about James visit www.steepergroup.com