

White-collar boxer packs a punch

Discover how Saam Golshani balances life in the legal arena with battles in the boxing ring.

HIDDEN TALENT

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When Paris Partner Saam Golshani isn't fighting legal cases, he's just as comfortable going into combat in the boxing ring.

In the past 12 months, Saam has fought for charity in two white collar fights, most recently winning a three-round light heavyweight contest against a much younger opponent.

Saam says: "These fights are serious and both amateur-licensed fighters train for at least six months to ensure they are in peak physical condition.

"I'm in my 50s, but I continue to box because it keeps me fit. It's also a raw test of what you're made of. You can't hide or run or be someone you aren't because boxing will find you out. It's also the purest form of fighting because, while you need a certain level of fitness and technical skill, around 90 percent of any fight is about mental strength, tactics and decision making."

In 2022, Saam fought in front of around 1,200 people on the roof of Paris's iconic La Defense building where he was narrowly defeated on points after three two-minute rounds.

He says: "Different countries have their own rules for white collar boxing. In France, there are points deductions for being too aggressive. It's more like fencing in that way, with points awarded for light contact and, in that fight, I struggled to understand the limit, losing by a single point."

Saam put that defeat behind him when he fought on another charity bill in front of 1,500 hundred people at Troxy in London. The event raised around €20,000 for Saam's chosen charity, the Marie Curie Foundation.

On this occasion he was matched with a fighter 15 years his junior but prevailed, winning all three rounds.

He says: "The rules in the UK are slightly different and, while you still need to wear head protection, you are allowed to be aggressive and go for a knockout. I think it was a bit of a surprise for a much younger fighter to be beaten by a guy my age, but experience sometimes helps."

Opponents for the fight are put forward by their boxing clubs and chosen as a good match for the opposing fighter.

WATCH TWO ROUNDS OF THE MATCH! 

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SAAM GOLSHANI, PARTNER, PARIS



“When it comes to boxing, there are three levels of fighter,” Saam explains, “those who just want to keep fit training with bags, those who spar and those who are prepared to put it on the line in the ring.

“There aren’t many people who are willing to do that, especially at my age, which is why I was matched with someone much younger.”

While law and fighting may seem very different, Saam believes that his boxing experience does come in handy in his day job.



He says: “It has given me a lot of self-confidence and composure under pressure, because if you can handle yourself in the ring, you can handle pretty much anything.

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Saam aims to train every day for at least an hour. His training includes sparring, boxing lessons and physical training as well as regular swims to build stamina. Ahead of the fight in London, he faced an unusual array of sparring partners.

He says: “I invited a couple of associates to come over and spar with me and I think they were taken aback by the fact a partner in his 50s could pack such a punch. After a couple of rounds, they were feeling the pressure and began realizing they might have overestimated their skills and stamina. It was really a fun experience for the three of us.”

Fighting has been a passion for Saam from a young age. He started judo at the age of six before moving to Aikido, boxing and then kickboxing. He even tried mixed martial arts (MMA) until a bad shoulder ended his involvement at the age of 40.

Saam explains: “MMA is as raw as it gets. You’re in a cage with no escape, which only increases the intensity. But it’s not a sport you can continue as you get older, so I switched back to boxing. When I injured my shoulder in MMA, I could barely move it for a year and, while my shoulder is never going to be as good as it used to be, you can get away with carrying an injury in boxing.”

Following the London fight, Saam had promised his wife Sarah that he’d retire from competitive fighting, but he’s already been tempted back into the ring with a fight in December.

He says: “I don’t know how long I can continue, but I’m planning a couple of fights before retiring.”

