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'It's not just for boys': Mom and her girls step into the ring

ROBERT WILLIAMS Telegraph-Journal

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Bryanne Brown talks with her two daughters Zoe, 6, and Ayla, 4, in the corner at KV Golden Gloves Boxing in Quispamsis. Brown will fight an exhibition match on Saturday at Fight Night at the Island View Lions Club.

QUISPAMISIS • Bryanne Brown always wanted to try boxing.

When she was 12-years-old, she met KV Golden Gloves Boxing owner and coach Tim Hayes, but said her dad wouldn't let her join.

Fifteen years later, with two young daughters, the stay-at-home mom stepped into the ring for the first time.

Brown is fresh off a 2018 nationals fight and gearing up for an exhibition match this weekend at the Island View Lions Club in Quispamsis as part of Fight Night in the Valley.

She's only been boxing for two years.

Her first fight, an exhibition in Moncton, ended in a technical knockout victory.

"They stopped it in the second round," said Brown, trying her best to hold back a smile. "It was exciting, it was my first one. So it was really just amazing."

Four fights later, Hayes mentioned the training camp for nationals to her, but Brown said she didn't think too much of it.

"I'm 30-years-old now with two kids. I never though – well I kind of thought about it. But then it was gone," she said.

She went to the training camp "just for the experience," and ended up making the team. She had four weeks to prepare, and although she didn't end up winning her fight, she said the experience was exhilarating.

Back in the boxing club where it all started, she watches as her two daughters wrap up their hands and learn the ropes from Hayes – all with the added bonus of mom's guidance.

Zoe, 6, has been involved in the sport for two years, just after Brown started. Ayla, 4, comes with her mom during the week.

"I just thought why not? I wanted to do it as a kid and my dad wouldn't let me. It's not just for boys. I think it's fantastic they're going to grow up learning how to defend themselves."

Watching the girls bounce around the ring, it's the type of mother-daughter experience that transcends sport.

"Yup, I like coming with my mom," Zoe said with a nervous smile. And when she grows up, "Yup, I do want to compete when I'm older."

In fact, the majority of the gym is female, said Hayes.

"We want to take away the stigma away from walking into a sweaty gym that's all smoky, with a suspicious looking promoter in the corner trying to get people to fight," said Hayes. "It's not like that."

Hayes said he wants the gym to be a family facility, and it features combinations of mothers, fathers, sons and daughters.

"I think it's because I was brought up like that," said Hayes. "All five of the boys in my family, and my sister who did karate and judo, all competed in contact sports."

And although Hayes stresses not everyone is there to compete, it's one of the biggest rushes of any contact sport. One-on-one, no one to pass the puck or ball off too, Brown describes it as the ultimate rush.

Doors open for Fight Night in the Valley at 6 p.m. on Saturday, with the card kicking off at 7pm. Tickets, \$15, are available at the gym or by contacting Hayes at 506-645-7976.

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