



# COMPETE AGAINST THE COMPLACENT WORKOUT

By Jason Erkes

**TELL ME IF THIS SOUNDS LIKE YOUR TYPICAL GYM ROUTINE:** running on a treadmill at a steady five miles an hour for 45 minutes before work, climbing the stair-stepper for 30 minutes while watching CNN or doing rep after rep on a handful of weight machines while staring at yourself in the health club mirror. These familiar-sounding workouts can all be summed up with one word: complacency.

If you feel like yawning with your daily fitness routine—and I do mean routine—let July be the month that you put work into your workout. It's time to think about pushing your limits, bringing out the best in your physique and letting out some summer rage. You'll stretch your fitness regime so far you may feel inclined to pen your own Nike ad—and star in it!



Caption for rock climbing goes here.

## From Molehills to Mountains

It is onward and upward, as they say. If you feel your workout has become, well, a little flat, then rock climbing is the perfect pick for you. The popular sport can be found in a few gyms around the city and all over the country. Chicago Sport and Social Club has an excellent program for beginners. Their climbing series focuses on the basic skills that can prepare you for a lifetime of climbing or, at least make you feel like you're really putting yourself out there. Or should I say up there?

Rock climbing instructors will teach you how to use the equipment and focus on the experience of climbing using different techniques

to move up and across a wall successfully and with a challenge. You won't just be ascending straight up the wall. Instead, you'll explore different routes, depending on your skill level, that lead you to the top.

This sport is fantastic for a number of reasons. First, rock climbing can be an indoor or outdoor activity with several local indoor walls and a couple of outdoor walls that are a mere road trip away. Second, it's a true full-body workout that tests your stamina, strength and your ability to think on your feet (a very good business skill, too). You can't zone out or lose focus when you're hanging 20 feet above ground. Finally, according to Chicago Sport and Social climbing instructor Tom Petraitis,

“You get the satisfaction of really finishing something at the end of your climb, which is great for the person who looks for that ‘crossing the finish line’ kind of feeling.”

**“Kickboxing. Sport of the future.”**  
—Lloyd Dobler



Can we get a kickboxing photo?

So you had a bad day. Bad break-up, bad blind date, bad day at the office, or, maybe you have a bad neighbor, mother-in-law, landlord—you name it. Kickboxing is something we can all use every once in while to release pent up frustrations. It’s also a bonafide cure to get over bad workouts.

It’s not possible to just go through the motions in this sport, especially if you’re hoping to fulfill your dream of embodying Hillary Swank, Sylvester Stallone or even Dobler. Take a kickboxing class and you can learn how to wrap your hand, kick, punch and let any ounce of anger out with everything you’ve got.

“You work out everything,” says Chicago Sport and Social kickboxing instructor Larry Lentz. “The class is rigorous, action-packed and includes cardiovascular, resistance training,

speed and eye-hand coordination.” With the right diet it will give your body a big jump on the weight loss train because you will really be taking your body on a marathon of activity.

Amy Modica, 27, counts on these kinds of classes for bringing out the best in her fitness ability. She says, “I always turn to a kickboxing program when I need to be refueled and inspired. When I’m in a slump, when I have somewhere to go that I need to look my best for, or when I feel like my regular workouts are just not doing anything, this is the kind of class I turn to, to turn it around.”

Luckily, finding a class is a pretty easy task. Most of the city’s larger gyms including East Bank Club, Equinox Fitness Clubs and Lake Shore Athletic Club offer some kind of kickboxing, cardiokick, cardio-box and so forth. For all of you non-gym joiners, or those of you who want to meet new people, Chicago Sport and Social is at your service. Regardless of where you kick, punch and bring out your inner tough girl stuff, plan on seeing results, feeling kind of badass and oh yeah, being sore.

**G.I. Jane or Michelle or Sarah... or whoever you are**

For those really looking to reboot your complacent workout there’s one more strenuous option I can suggest: Boot Camp Fitness Classes. Sometimes it can take an army—or maybe just some military-style training techniques—to be all that you can be. All year long boot camp classes take place at different locations in the city and suburbs. Instead of weight machines, treadmills, body-balls and dumbbells, it’s just you against the earth. And you against a head-strong coach screaming “drop and give me 20!”

A huge perk about boot camp fitness classes is that it’s something new every day. “This is a class where in a four or five week stretch no class will be same,” says Greg Major, Chicago

Sport and Social drill instructor and owner of Bulldog Boot Camp. Any one of these sessions will focus on strength, cardiovascular skill, speed, power and flexibility.

The other aspect of a boot camp-style class that makes it unique is that it’s outside, meaning you use whatever’s outside as part of your workout. That could mean the beach, a bench or yes, several flights of stairs. Like I said, if you feel like your workout needs an aggressive overhaul and you really want to whip your body into shape, boot camp fitness is the answer. So become a new recruit and enlist today. Military life can be rough, but in the end you’ll feel like a million bucks.

They say variety is the spice of life, so why not spice up your workouts with a little variety? Take it to the next level and have fun in the process. I say sign up, don’t look back and just do it! ■

### Events To Watch Out For...

**Bally Total Fitness Race to Taste 5K Run and 2 Mile walk.** July 2 check out [www.cityofchicago.com](http://www.cityofchicago.com) for more information. **Chicago Park District Boxing Show,** July 14 at Garfield Park [www.chicagopark-district.com](http://www.chicagopark-district.com) **Fleet Feet Super Sprint** on August 26th raises money for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. [www.chicagotriathlon.com/ffss/welcom.htm](http://www.chicagotriathlon.com/ffss/welcom.htm)



▲ Jason Erkes, president of Chicago Sport and Social Club, is at the top of his game running the nation’s largest organizer of adult recreational sports leagues and social events—the Sport and Social Clubs. He also helps keep Chicago fit through a powerhouse recreational sports marketing company and as a founding member of Mayor Daley’s Physical Fitness Council. Jason’s background is a mix of marketing, politics and media. Before taking over the Club, he was an award-winning television producer at Fox News, covering local and national news events with a focus on politics. To sign up for sports leagues, visit [www.chicagosportand-socialclub.com](http://www.chicagosportand-socialclub.com), or call 312.335.9596.



Caption for Bulldog Boot Camp goes here.