

SKILLS & TECHNIQUE

TRICKS OF BOX



Australia's finest trainer
JOHNNY LEWIS tells you
how to throw a punch

Do bullies kick sand in your face at the beach? Feel scared to walk the streets after dark? No worries, just learn to pack a punch the Johnny Lewis' way:

JAB

The jab is there to score you points and to set up other punches. Once your jab's working well all the other punches fall into place. There are two sorts of jab – one that's racking up the points for you and stopping your opponent from getting set, keeping him off balance. There's also the stiff jab after you've got through with a few – you put a little bit more on it, which can hurt. From that you can hook off your jab, double up your jab, or the right cross comes in to play.

When you jab, your elbow's in by your side and you're throwing it straight out from your chin. You put a little turn on it when you throw it, so the full-knuckle lands on your opponent's head or chest. If you're jabbing with your left hand your left foot's always in front, and vice versa. You're not real square-on when you jab, so it's a transfer – there's a lot of shoulder, but you get that lean in from the hip area, where most of the power comes from.

HOOK

A good hook is a very short hook, because the best counter to a left hook is your own left hook. If he brings it out to such an extent that he's pulled

outside the line too much and it's a swing, you can get inside and bang with your short hook.

For the left hook, lift your left foot, turn your knee in, and get a lot of twist from the hip, so a lot of power comes from the hip and lower body. Keep the right hand up because you'll come back with your right cross if he's still standing. A good left hook to the liver will drop an elephant.

THE CROSS

You can use the right cross as a counter-punch, or to follow your jab or hook. Your weight is still on the front foot, your toe and knee are in position. The right shoulder has a lot to do with this one. It's important to keep your chin down when you extend the right hand, so your chin is protected by the shoulder and bicep area. It's a good one to put in a combination. There's nothing better than a good one-two: straight left-jab, right cross.

THE UPPERCUT

This is a very good punch up the centre. With the right upper-cut, you bend the knee and change the angle from the right cross to bring it up. It's all angles – everything in boxing is angles. If you're fighting someone and they wake up to the hook and the right cross and they've got both hands up either side of their chin, that's when you try to jab or come up with upper-cuts through the centre.

Watch man: In the ring with Jeff Fenech.



MENTAL STRENGTH

The Big Questions

Sharon Hannan, coach of Olympic silver medallist **SALLY McLELLAN**, on developing mental toughness

What mental strengths do top athletes have?

To be able to compete at the top level, an athlete has to really want it and to be able to bounce back. Because I'm a hurdles coach, we have athletes having crashes and accidents all the time. We try to teach them to roll with it, bounce up and carry on. Some can, but others can't – even if they see others doing it. If they've got a sore ankle or whatever, it affects them more than it does others.

Can they cope better when something goes wrong physically?

Some athletes definitely have a greater ability to tolerate pain and push their bodies further. I knew one who tore his quad in a 400m race, but insisted on running the



4x100m relay. By the end, you could see a lump where the quad had torn right through and rolled up his leg. **Is this toughness something you can learn?** Definitely, although some of it is who you are as a person. As a junior, one day a parent might say: "I can't give

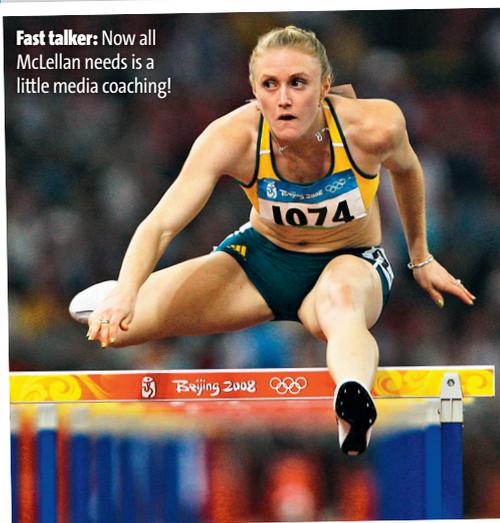
you a lift to training." Some kids might be happy to stay at home, but those who want it enough say: "I'll walk." I'm not a "ra-ra"-type coach; I try to be kind and encouraging, but a lot of it has to come from the athlete. I try to teach them that life is always changing, that they shouldn't expect things to go well all the time. I remember one athlete who came back from so many serious injuries, and still managed to have a 16-year career.

Sally does well in big races.

How does she do that?

Part of being competitive at the top level is not to let yourself get distracted. It might be a case of having the discipline to train and to live the right way; it might be a case of coping with the stress of a big race. A top athlete can run their own race and respond to that challenge and not worry about what the other people in the race are doing – they seem to become even more determined.

Fast talker: Now all McLellan needs is a little media coaching!



INNOVATION

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