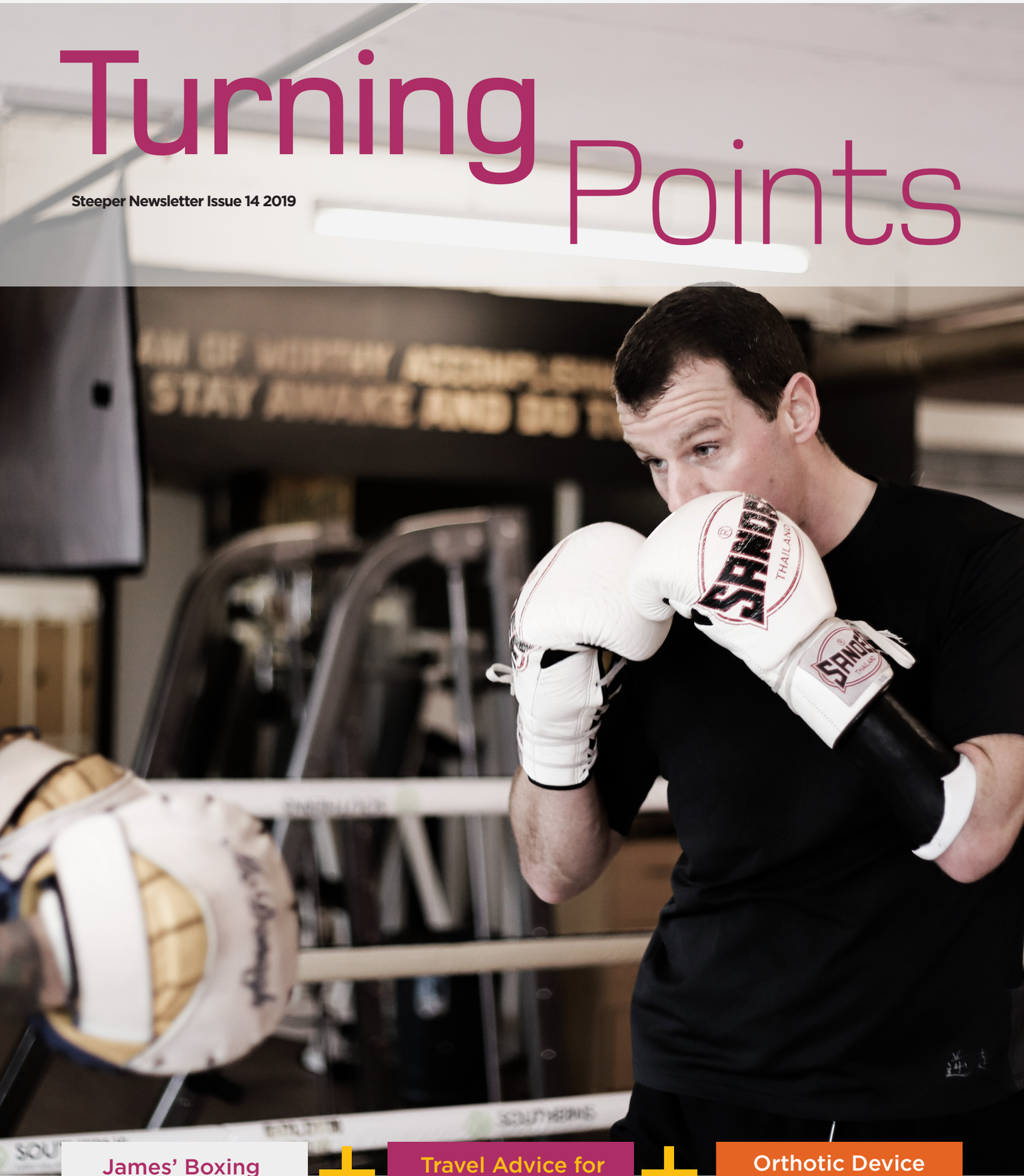
Turning Points

Steeper Newsletter Issue 14 2019



James' Boxing Dream

Travel Advice for Disabled Travellers

Orthotic Device Fitting Videos

steeper

Creating life's turning points, together

CEO message
Paul Steeper

This quarter saw us host two excellent training days on the innovative Click Medical prosthetic products, encouraging prosthetists to prompt when patients may benefit from additional adjustment of their socket and fabricating this into the socket design.

We've also launched a fantastic video library of how to fit an orthotic device and we look forward to adding to this with your suggestions.

In this issue we also feature advice on travelling with a disability, and James, who by working with his prosthetist now has a new boxing prosthesis to train with.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and please do share any feedback to marketingteam@steepergroup.com.

Best wishes,

In this issue...

We would love to hear from you!

Please send your feedback to:

marketingteam@steepergroup.com

Steeper Group Celebrates 2 Years as a Disability Confident Employer

We're thrilled to be awarded the certification as a disability confident employer for the next two years. At the same time we celebrate having completed two years with the scheme, designed to encourage organisations to take the right steps such as accessible workplaces for those with physical disabilities, and additional support for those affected by learning difficulties and mental health conditions.

We're proud supporters of the government led scheme, as we continue to provide innovative products which help people get into work and live a comfortable, confident life with their disability.

Continued

Improvements in Quality Management

Steeper employees from across the orthotic and prosthetic production teams at HQ have completed Quality Assurance Training in ISO 9001:2015 to improve quality management systems in-line with the ISO 9001 framework.

This training enables core groups to be set up to identify area for and implement improvements. The training has already provided a significant improvement to our production processes, and demonstrates our dedication to ensuring the ISO 9001:2015 quality standard is upheld.

Steeper Host Click Medical Training Day

May saw the team at Steeper HQ welcome prosthetists and technicians to explore fabricating techniques using the **Click Medical RevoFit2™** system, and gave attendees the opportunity to discuss application possibilities and usage cases. The training was led by Joe Mahon, co-founder and chief technical officer at Click Medical, who provided insights on **advanced socket design and optimal fit** for patients.

Example socket builds were used so the attendees could see exactly how the RevoFit2 could be customised for the patient, allowing them to adjust their own socket fit throughout the day.

Excellent feedback was received and attendees commented that they were keen to apply what they had learned to "improve my manufacturing skills" and to "use the Click Medical products more - prompting when a patient may need them rather than waiting for them to have fitting issues."

If you are interested in learning more about socket design using the RevoFit2™ system; the **Can You Adjust (CYA)** training is available online. Sign up to this **educational series** via the RevoFit2 page at www.steepergroup.com and you will receive a free check socket to practice your fabrication techniques straight away!

New: Kintrol Hydraulic Foot/Ankle

We are pleased to introduce the Kintrol Foot/Ankle by **Freedom Innovations** to our lower limb prosthetic portfolio, as an optimal solution for low K2 ambulators. Constructed using **aerospace-grade fibreglass,** the durability and flexibility of this prosthesis provides a natural gait aided by **innovative hydraulic technology**.

Suitable for a wide range of user requirements, with **independent adjustable dorsiflexion and plantarflexion** which clinicians can access without having to remove the foot shell. For transtibial patients, the ankle's hydraulic flexion reduces tibial pressure inside the socket so it remains secure and comfortable throughout the day. The full-length toe lever provides **increased knee stability** ideal for transfemoral patients.

The key feature of this foot/ankle system is the integrated hydraulic ankle technology designed to **prevent tripping;** using an active dorsi-assist spring to aid toe clearance during the swing phase and progressive ankle stop for increased ground contact and balance. These features, combined with the 2° dorsi and 10° plantar range of motion, enable users to move around securely with increased ankle movement.

Key Features of the Kintrol Foot/Ankle:

- Independently adjustable dorsiflexion and plantarflexion settings for a customisable experience, which clincians can adjust without having to remove the foot shell
- Dorsi-Assist spring aids ground clearance in swing phase
- Progressive ankle stop for increased ground contact and better balance
- Stiffening heel bumpers in four categories included, to enhance balance and provide stability
- High-quality aerospace-grade fibreglass to enable flexibility in the foot for a comfortable, smooth rollover

For more details about the Kintrol Foot/Ankle speak to your Steeper product manager or visit **www.steepergroup.com**

Introducing the AMAneo BTi

We are pleased to announce that the innovative AMAneo BTi has been recently added to the Steeper Assistive Technology portfolio.

The AMAneo BTi allows users with physical disabilities to use iOS devices such as iPads or iPhones via a mouse of their choice; be that an ergonomic mouse, button switch, gyroscopic or joystick mouse. The AMAneo BTi and chosen mouse work via a **Bluetooth connection** with the iOS device, with no other software or app required.

This pioneering device includes intuitive features such as an **anti-tremor filter** which allows users with conditions such as Parkinson's Disease to utilise iPads and iPhones, that would otherwise have been inaccessible, via an ergonomic or head mouse to smoothly navigate the touch pointer across the screen.

Other useful features include the iOS AssistiveTouch menu, giving **instant access to commonly used functions** such as the 'Home' button or volume control. Built in options include auto-click, click-delay and click-and-drag to avoid accidental activation of the mouse click.

For more info visit the Assistive Technology section of our website **www.steepergroup.com or contact the team at assist@steepergroup.com.**

The Advantages of Height Adjustable Feet

The ability for prosthetic users to adjust heel height easily, without changing further settings of the limb build is a much desired feature and proves very popular amongst our patients.

We are pleased to offer two types of feet within our lower limb portfolio which **operate with the touch of a button, or via a Hex Key**, allowing the user to adjust the heel height to go from barefoot, to a heavy soled outdoor shoe through to a dress shoe with higher heel.

Both the **Runway™ foot from Freedom Innovations** and the **Accent® IP/Accent® DP from College Park** allow the user 5cm of adjustment height.

Supplied with a **sandal toe footshell** as standard, the Runway™ and Accent® feet offer cost effective and **cosmetically appealing** options for the prosthetic user.

To find out more about the benefits of height adjustable feet visit the lower limb prosthetics area of our website www.steepergroup.com

Runway™ features

- User adjustable via push button or Hex Key
- 'Gliding' ankle design ensures consistent alignment
- Carbon fibre for energy return
- 6 stiffness categories
- Sandal toe footshell as standard
- Cost effective

Accent® IP and Accent® DP features

- User adjustable heel height with 5cm range
- Easy to operate height adjustment button
- Sandal toe footshell as standard
- Ankle fairing for improved cosmesis
- Maintenance free
- Cost effective

Steeper Win New Orthotic Goods and Services Contract

We are delighted to announce that Steeper Group have been awarded the contract to continue to provide orthotic goods and services to Sunderland Royal Hospital.

Our existing team in Sunderland have proved invaluable in securing the contract, and it is testament to the ongoing partnership between Steeper Group and the hospital which has been in place for more than a decade.

The new contract is for one year with the option to extend for a further two. We're thrilled to be continuing our partnership with the hospital and are pleased to continue offering excellent clinical services and products to our patients in the area.

Latest Travel Advice for Holidaying with a Disability

Travelling with a disability can be daunting, especially if you're going away for the first time with a prosthesis or wheelchair. However there are lots of exciting and accessible desinations to enjoy.

We've put together some useful advice and tips about choosing the right destination, how to book, what to pack and what to expect during your trip.

Choosing a destination

Start by making a list of what you want from your trip; is it relaxation or a chance to see some of the world's best known attractions? Next, research where people in similar circumstances have travelled, there are some great blogs created by amputees and wheelchair users about their travel experiences.

Lonely Planet recommend that Barcelona is one of the world's most accessible cities. Another great suggestion for first time travellers and those looking to combine sightseeing with relaxation is to opt for a cruise. Ships are designed with accessibility in mind, and with research into the itinerary of the trip you can plan on which destinations to disembark and explore.

Booking your trip

However you choose to travel there will be a wide range of assistance options available. The most effective way of assuring any assistance is covered is to either book directly with the airline or travel provider or via a specialist travel agent.

When booking be specific about the type of assistance you need and ensure you give the full details of the assistance devices you will be bringing.

When booking seats, it is advisable to select an aisle seat to make getting up during travel easier.

What to pack

Pack a separate bag containing your essential items and those you will need for the journey. If you require liquid, gel or cream medication in containers over 100ml you will need a note from your doctor to confirm this. All other medication should be clearly labelled ready for inspection.

Checks before you go

Check all of your equipment, charge batteries and take a list of what batteries you are carrying as different types have different rules for travel.

Be sure to check in with your prosthetitst before travelling and check all the devices you plan to take with you.

At the airport

Be sure to get there with plenty of time. If you are using the assistance services make sure you ask about who will meet you, at what time and what the next stage of the process will be.

Your wheelchair and or prosthesis may be subject to extra security checks; this is perfectly normal but if you feel uncomfortable or require more privacy be sure to ask the security staff.

For more travel advice read the full feature on our website www.steepergroup.com where we've also included some useful links to other organisations which you may find useful when planning your trip.

Steeper Prosthetics Teams Help Developing Nations

Prosthetist Alasdair Gilbertson and the team at Portsmouth recently collected used lower limb prosthetic components for an initiative organised by Winchester Rotary Club, donating them to train prosthetic technicians to benefit amputees in St Lucia.

The components were passed from Portsmouth to a charity and handling agents in Southampton who all donated their time, expertise and shipping free of charge to ensure the safe arrival of the components in St Lucia.

Winchester Rotarian Richard Spalding explains why there is a great need for prosthetics in St Lucia, “St Lucia has one of the highest levels of diabetes per capita in the world and also has an unusually high number of road traffic accidents; combined, these mean St Lucia has a disproportionately high number of amputees.”

Alasdair said of the initiative “we are really pleased to have been able to recycle some of our prosthetic devices to be utilsed in St Lucia”.

Whilst in May, Steeper Prosthetist Asad Khan visted Madagascar as part of the work carried out by charities OPT IN and Global Rehabilitation who seek to share knowledge and skills used within NHS services to clinics in Madagascar and beyond, working particularly closely with Leeds Teaching Hospitals.

Asad and the group delivered training to doctors, physiotherapists and prosthetists from across Madagascar about amputee rehabilitation. Topics included casting and fabrication techniques and rehabilitation exercises. Attendees gained their Diplome Universitaire and will implement the training receieved at clinics across Madagascar. Asad also assisted with the installation of new machinery and trained the local prosthetist in manufacturing a trans-tibial prosthesis.

For more information about transferring skills to other countries visit www.globalrehabilitation.org and www.optin.uk.net

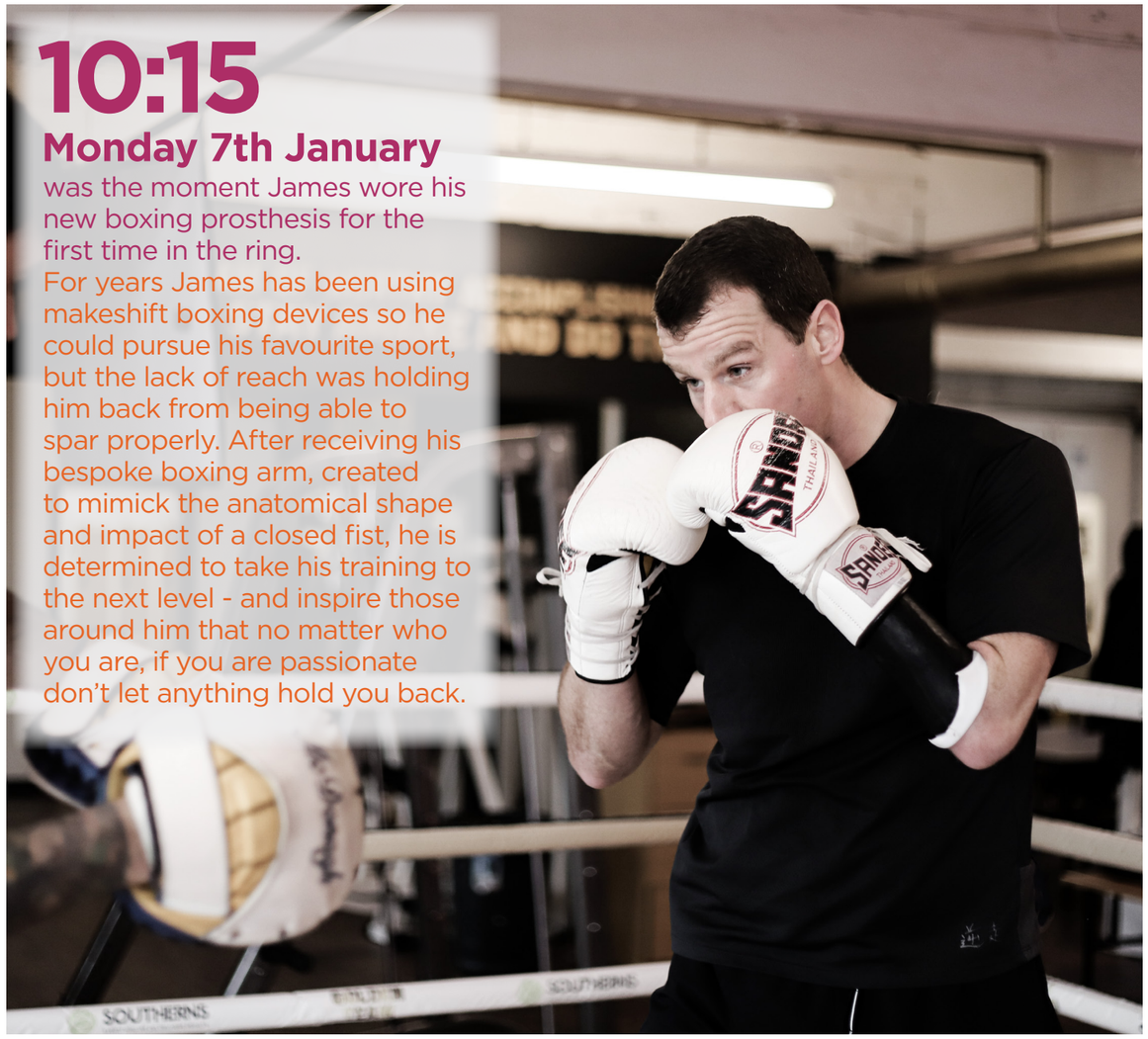
Fitting Orthotic Devices Video Library Online

As part of our ongoing commitment to patient satisfaction we have created a library of resources to help patients, their parents or carers fit orthotic devices such as AFOs or chest braces.

Recent feedback to our orthotists has been that when leaving an appointment where lots of information and advice has been given, its often difficult to remember all the fitting instructions even if it appeared straight forward at the time.

Our videos are designed to take the fitting step-by-step and can be viewed as many times as needed from the Steeper Group website: www.steepergroup.com/orthotics/clinical-services/orthotics-video-library

If you have experienced difficulty when fitting a device, or your patient has discussed a common fitting issue and you feel a step-by-step video may help others please email marketingteam@steepergroup.com with the details. We look forward to expanding this libarary to help our patients further.



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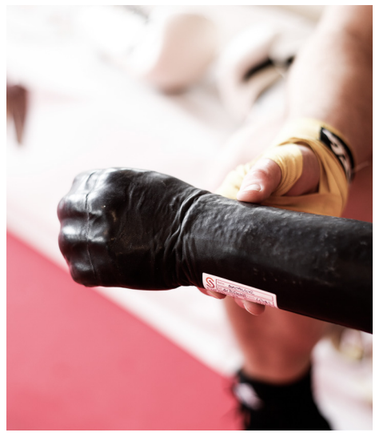
Monday 7th January

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 wouldnt 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

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Creating life’s turning points, together

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.

Asad 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. After James explained how sparring worked and the rules when in the ring, Asad then enlisted the help of prosthetic technician Roger to manufacture a suitable device.

Firstly, they 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

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