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Adventure Boot Camp makes women sweat

Boot campers get fit in early bird program at Lipscomb

By Angela Patterson • THE TENNESSEAN • February 9, 2009

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Marilyn Swing, age 59, needed an exercise program that started at a time of day when she could not find an excuse to skip her workout: 5:45 a.m.

At age 32, Kristin Goetz has always exercised but wanted to shake up her normal gym routine.

ADVERTISEMENT Admitting she doesn't have much athletic ability, Misty Welch, 31, was looking for an exercise class that could help her get strong and toned.

And despite these women's differences in age, lifestyle and fitness goals, they all chose the same program, Adventure Boot Camp.

Invented by fitness guru John Spencer Ellis in California in the late 1990s, Adventure Boot Camp is now conducted by licensed and certified leaders in more than 250 locations across the country.

Green Hills native and personal trainer Josh Allen recently began teaching the boot camp, a combination of fitness instruction, nutritional coaching and motivational training, at Lipscomb University, offering Nashvillians the only Adventure Boot Camp in Middle Tennessee.

Strength, Endurance Targeted

Allen watched an episode of the Bravo channel show *Real Housewives of Orange County* in which one of the housewives participates in the boot camp at its original location. His interest piqued, Allen looked up the program on line and found out how to get certified to offer it.

"Ellis developed both the training module and the business model," Allen said. "It's not totally unique, but it's a different approach.

"It took about a month to get certified to do this. I was already an ISSA-certified personal trainer,



SHELLEY MAYS / THE TENNESSEAN

Katie Austin works out during an Adventure Boot Camp at the Student Activities Center in Lipscomb University.

IF YOU GO

Adventure Boot Camp
The third cycle of Adventure Boot Camp starts Monday, Feb. 16.
Time: 5:45 a.m. weekdays for four consecutive weeks
Place: Lipscomb University Student Activities Center
Cost: \$299 for five days a week/ \$199 for three days a week
Items needed: exercise mat, one set of small hand weights (5 or 8 pounds), water bottle, running shoes
Web site: www.nashvillebootcamp.com

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but the certification for Adventure Boot Camp is pretty intense."

And the workout offered is equally difficult. For five days a week for four weeks, a group of about 20 women complete a combination of strength and core training, cardio, obstacle courses and yoga. It's meant to be challenging, but Allen makes sure to adjust each part of the workout to people's fitness levels.

"Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses and sometimes even an injury, and Josh is very cognizant of that," Swing said. "He will easily modify a routine for one who needs something slightly different, so they will get a safe but complete workout."

Allen said the key to success is to keep it fresh, and so he changes the workout every day to include sports-specific drills that target strength, coordination and balance.

"We do a lot of core conditioning, jogging, abdominal work, planks," Allen said. "A lot of what we do is old-fashioned, but it's effective."

So effective that for the first week, Welch hurt all over.

"I could barely sit down. I soaked in Epsom Salt baths and took ibuprofen," Welch said. "But by week two I was full of energy and I could do the exercises longer. Now I can actually see my biceps and my abs."

Benefits Outweigh Cost

Compared to other area boot camps, Allen said there might not be huge differences in terms of exercises, but it's definitely different in the level of involvement.

"The personal attention, the extras offered, such as the body fat test and the nutrition seminar, the networking with the other girls, the camaraderie sets it apart," Allen said.

"It's great to have other women working with you and helping you push yourself to your goals," Goetz said.






And no matter the woman's age or fitness level, she can participate and feel results and a sense of accomplishment.

"I am the oldest in this group by a number of years and can't always keep up the pace," Swing said. "But I have never felt that I am holding back the group and always feel like I have worked hard and gotten a good workout. When I am just at the point of thinking I can't make it another step, the routine changes to something new or different, and we get our second wind and work some more."






In a time where people are pinching pennies, campers said this isn't something to skip just because of the \$300 price tag.

"The cost was more than reasonable in my opinion, but it was certainly a consideration, as with anything," Goetz said. "When you compare it to the cost of a personal trainer, however, there just is no comparison. At a minimum, a trainer for an hour a day five days a week for a month would be around \$1,000. That well exceeds the cost of the camp."

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Allen said attendees could expect to end the four weeks with 5 to 12 less pounds, a three to four percent body fat reduction, a smaller midsection and a large confidence boost.






"Though it can be difficult, it is never boring," swing said. "We know we can make it through the hour and will feel great about what we accomplished."

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