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## TOUGHEST WORKOUTS PART III

It's a quick trip up two steep, narrow flights of stairs to

Edward Rush's fitness studio. I walk through the door to Rush balancing on a core board in front of a big wood-framed mirror, doing some sort of stretch. Without breaking rhythm, he tells me I can change in the bathroom behind him. We'll be getting into the workout, which will be all about using and maximizing strength in tight spaces. As it turns out, Rush is a street boxing specialist.

Rush's studio is about 20-meters long, lined with basic dumbbells, bar weights and a number of machines not found in commercial gyms. It's not a particularly big setup, but it's all he and his four trainers need. I start off in front of the gym's only mirror holding a small kettlebell and standing, shoeless, with one foot on the core board bringing the weight across my body to the ground and back up for a shoulder press. I feel like I'm speed skating as I do 15 reps to warm up every muscle.

The first part of the workout is a five-exercise circuit with a Spin bike recovery, to be done twice. The first half focuses on weight lifting power cleans, seated shoulder presses and preacher curls. Instead of counting reps I just pound them out until Rush tells me to stop (indicated by the fact that I'm dying). Then comes a step drill with me holding two-pound weights by my chin and hopping on each side of a foot-high board. Then I'm holding the same weights and throwing punches at the air trying to get my form down, which I'll need for the next part.



Every time my friends and I argue about what is the hardest sport we always settle on boxing, though none of us really know because none of us have ever boxed. After part two of my workout with Rush, I have proof. He dances around a small surface area with boxing mitts on, calling out punch combos ("Jab! Six! Ten!") while I follow him and execute the combo. If my stabs are weak, he makes me do it again. If I fail to bring my hands back to my cheeks for defense, he smacks me. After a three-minute round I grab some water and feel all right, frisky even. But it's during the next four minutes where I feel my strength slowly being sapped. Suddenly, my core tires of snapping my hips to put power behind my punches, I'm panting and hoping he calls time. My shoulders are done and my opponent didn't even throw any punches.

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