

Time Out
New York

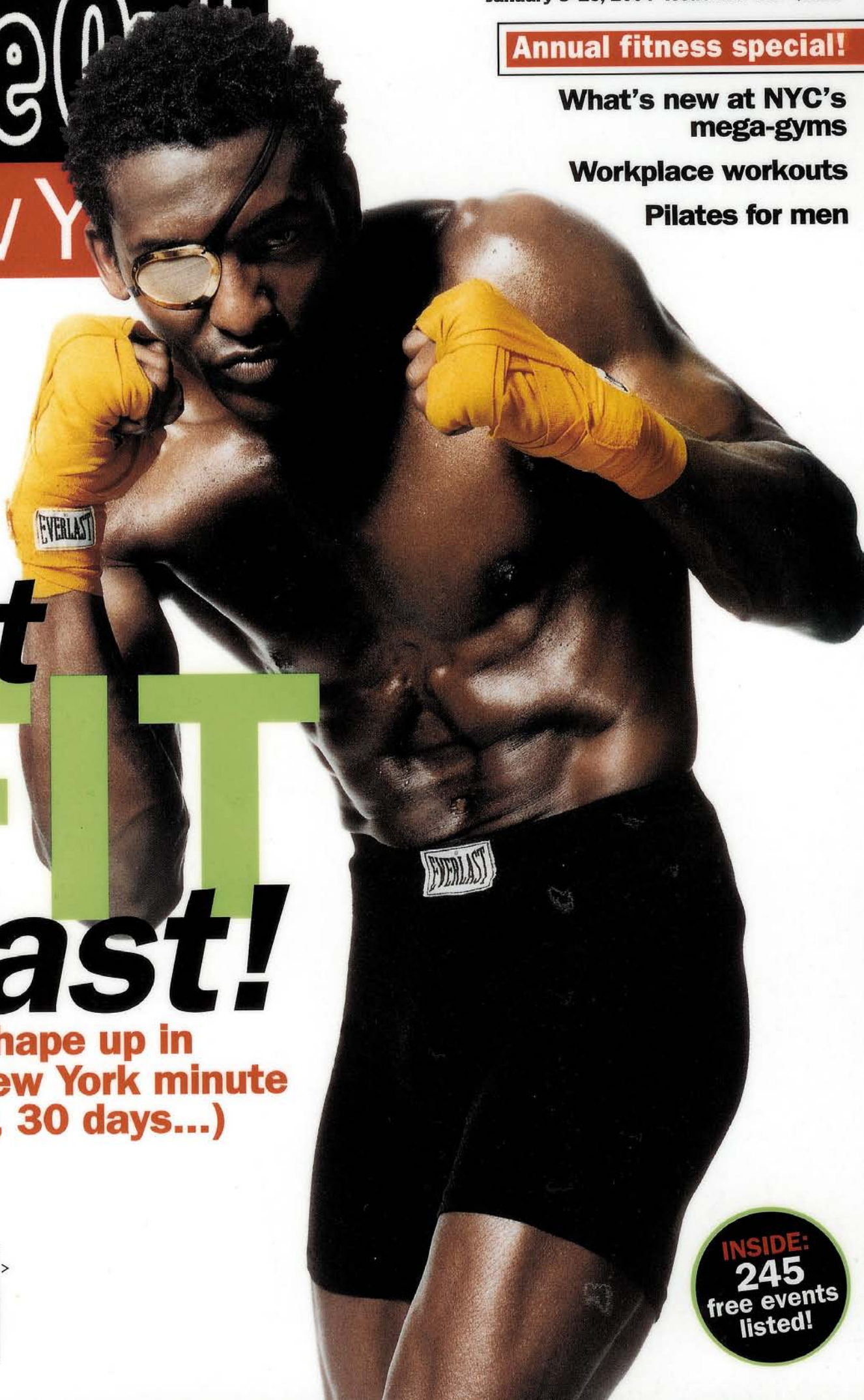
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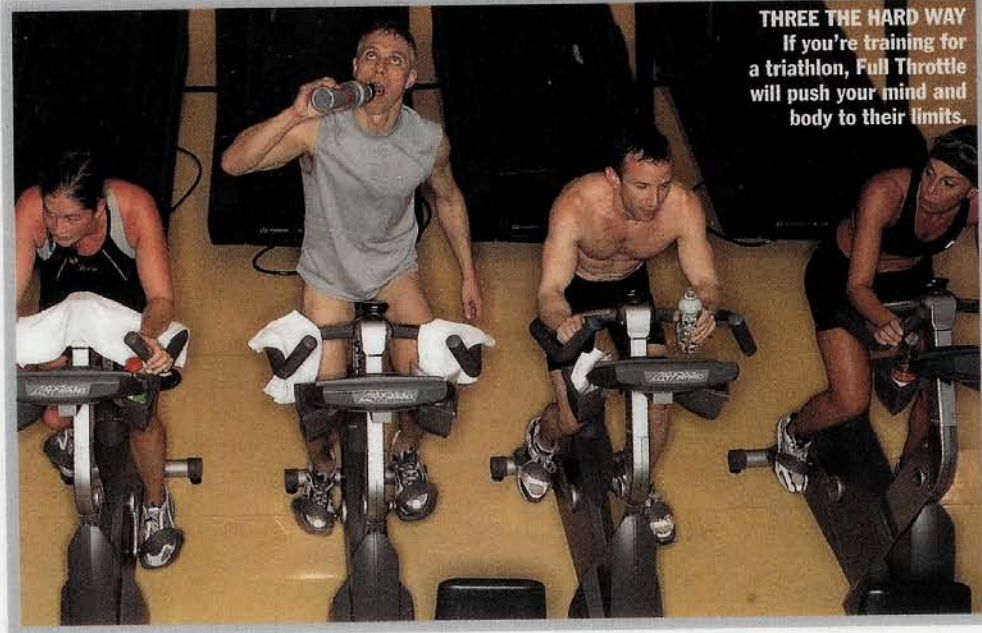
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a New York minute
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THREE THE HARD WAY
If you're training for a triathlon, Full Throttle will push your mind and body to their limits.

Full Throttle at Chelsea Piers

Lose the ego!" is the mantra of the Full Throttle Endurance Challenge at the Sports Center at Chelsea Piers, an eight-week training session designed to push your body and mind to their limits in preparation for racing a triathlon. The program is the brainchild of Scott Berlinger, a personal trainer and Ironman veteran, and he's serious about the ego removal. "Push harder—if you quit now you'll quit during a race" is typical of Berlinger's frequent admonishments.

Getting into the class requires a qualification tryout, and that means being able to run a nine-minute mile, swim 500 yards in 12 minutes, and endure strength and agility tests. Once you've been approved, you can choose from one of Full Throttle's two tiers, beginner and advanced; each session meets for two hours, two mornings a week. As a competitive triathlete, I joined to see whether a program like this would benefit conditioned athletes and simulate the rigor of triathlon competition. The answer was yes.

We begin at 5:45am, while the rest of Manhattan is either leaving a nightclub or still dreaming. Along with 12 classmates, I hit the pool and grind out laps. After 300 yards, we get out and put on our sneakers to run a mile, only to repeat this routine three more times. Then we rest for five minutes—the longest break of the workout.

Next, we head to the rock wall, climbing up and down a minimum of four times, to work the muscles forgotten during the last exercise. Push-ups follow the wall, sprints follow the push-ups, and spinning follows the sprints. For good measure, we go outside

and do leg explosions, which are lunges up and down the perimeter staircases. In an Ironman (2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride and a full marathon) or a shorter race, your body must remain active for as long as 12 hours, so Berlinger wants to subject us to what it feels like during hour eight of the race.

A frequent exerciser faces the risk of getting bored with a regimen. But no yawning here: Berlinger takes advantage of all the indoor and outdoor areas at the Piers and most of its equipment. If he could find a way to incorporate golf into the workout, he would.

No one just wakes up one morning and becomes a triathlete; it takes months of training. But Full Throttle offers a taste of race-day conditions and an idea of what your body will endure during a triathlon. What this class gave me—in

addition to improved swimming times after a month—was an opportunity to train with people who have the same passion about fitness, and a group of new friends to accompany me on weekend runs and rides.—*Ilan Altman*
The Sports Center at Chelsea Piers, Pier 60, W 23rd St at West Side Highway (212-336-6000; www.chelseapiers.com).

Church Street Boxing Gym

Ever watch a boxing match and wonder why the two musclemen in the ring are just standing there, hugging each other? Let me tell you: It's because they're friggin' tired. That's what I learned on my first day at the Church Street Boxing Gym, where I'd signed up for a month of unlimited instruction. During the rest of my thrice-weekly workouts, I also got an education in jabbing, uppercutting, bobbing and sweating more than I ever thought humanly possible.

Started by Justin Blair in 1997, Church Street is a bare-bones gym with a raised ring, a smorgasbord of punching bags, a small area of free weights, a huge mural of Jack Dempsey and a crew of trainers, all with competitive experience (and many with Golden Gloves titles under their belts). I came in with the goal of getting my lazy butt in shape as quickly as possible. And if I could hold my own in a fight at the end of the month, all the better.

I soon realized that stamina was the most important thing I needed. After just a few rounds of shadowboxing, my arms were exhausted. But per my routine, I had three more rounds each on the hanging bag and the speed bag, and another one hitting hand pads held by



WHAT'S YOUR BAG?
Gather your stamina, get in the ring and work up a sweat at Church Street Boxing Gym.