

Gym owners muscle in on new franchise

BY PENELOPE GREEN

NEWCASTLE's thirst for working out shows no signs of abating, with F45 owners Jamie Shoemark and Jordan Nisbet scouting for a location to open their third gym in two years.

There are about six gyms within a one-kilometre radius from the F45 gym the duo opened in Bull Street, Newcastle West, in July 2014.

So how are they still competitive?

"We are one of the fittest nations in the world - but 45 minutes of training a day can change that," says Mr Nis-

bet of what he says is rising awareness of training benefits on life span and health.

F45 - short for Functional 45, or 45-minutes training - is a franchised fitness business founded by Australian celebrity trainer Luke Istomin that began in Sydney, and has become a global craze, with Hugh Jackman and Nicole Richie reportedly among devotees.

Mr Nisbet and Mr Shoemark, both personal trainers, tried a class in the original Paddington gym and soon decided they wanted to become a franchisee in the then relatively unknown brand.

"We had an idea to open a gym and a friend said 'check out this business' and as

soon as we did the workout we knew it was the best to train on," Mr Shoemark says.

The appeal, he says, lies in the fact that the high-intensity F45 work-out can be adapted to suit all fitness levels: "It doesn't matter what condition you are in, you jump into a class and it challenges every individual, and that's what keeps it exciting."

While other gym workouts can become tedious, he says, an F45 workout is always different because F45 head-

quarters has devised more than 800 workouts that are on high rotation, along with upbeat tunes that lend a fun, almost dance floor feel to a workout.

Mr Nisbet and Mr Shoemark opened the Hunter's first F45 gym in Bull Street in 2014 before opening their second franchise in Warners Bay in May last year.

Run by Mike Wilkins, the Warners Bay gym's demographic is more about family compared to the city gym, which tends to attract professionals and couples.

Mr Wilkins says current clients at his gym are six

members of one family who have collectively lost 118 kilograms.

"We have had so many transformations in clients, lots of couple who come in

and literally change their lives as far as increased motivation and mobility," says Mr Shoemark.

He and Mr Nisbet are now close to signing contracts to open a third F45 gym in the Hunter, but remain tight-tipped on its location due to legalities. [There are four other independently owned F45 gyms in the region].

Watch this space, gymnasium fiends.



SHOW OF STRENGTH: F45 Newcastle and Warners Bay owners Jamie Shoemark, left, and Jordan Nisbet, right, with manager Mike Wilkins, centre.